EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

LOUISE AITKEN-WALKER

THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT

MOTORSPORT NEWS

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Britain's first World Rally title winner tackles the MN readers' questions p20

Twenty-year-old battler beats the big names to win "the craziest race I've been in"

SHARP SPEECHLESS AFTER WINNING LANDMARK 50TH FORMULA FORD FESTIVAL

Sharp was thrilled with Festival victory

Sharp withstood the pressure to win the biggest Formula Ford race of the season

By Graham Keilloh

Jamie Sharp was left speechless after beating a host of star names to win a dramatic Formula Ford Festival final in the event's landmark 50th running.

Sharp, who started the final in sixth, benefited from an early-race collision removing three cars ahead, then got the lead when multiple Festival winner Joey Foster hit a damp patch and ran off.

Sharp then won out in a frenetic battle with 2020 National FF1600 champion Neil Maclennan, though Maclennan was later disqualified for passing Sharp under a yellow flag.

FF1600 regular Sharp, 20, told MN: "I've been in some dramatic races but that was by far the craziest race I've been in. Not really got much I can think to say.

"It is really special, it's an honour to have won this race. It was obviously meant to be."

Ex-Formula 1 star and 1980 Formula Ford Festival winner Roberto Moreno did not make the semi-finals after being spun in his heat. His fellow star names and Festival winners Jan Magnussen and Dennis Lind made the final and finished 11th and ninth respectively.

Full report p16-17

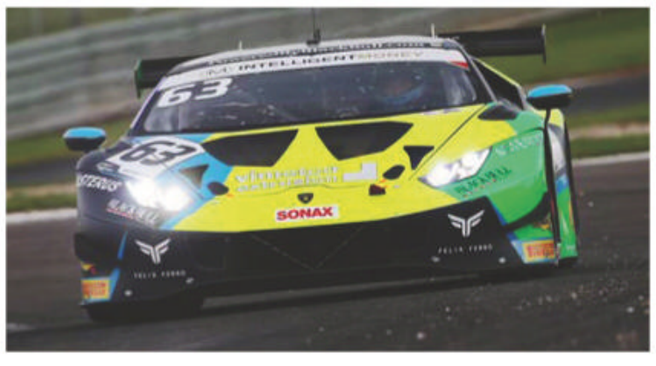
THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT NEWS

REPORT

PRYCE IS RIGHT ON CAMBRIAN BATTLE

Welshman takes top on British Rally clash as Edwards errs **P18**

REVIEW



LAMBO TAKES GOLD IN BRITISH GT

How Machitski and Lind topped sportscars **P26**

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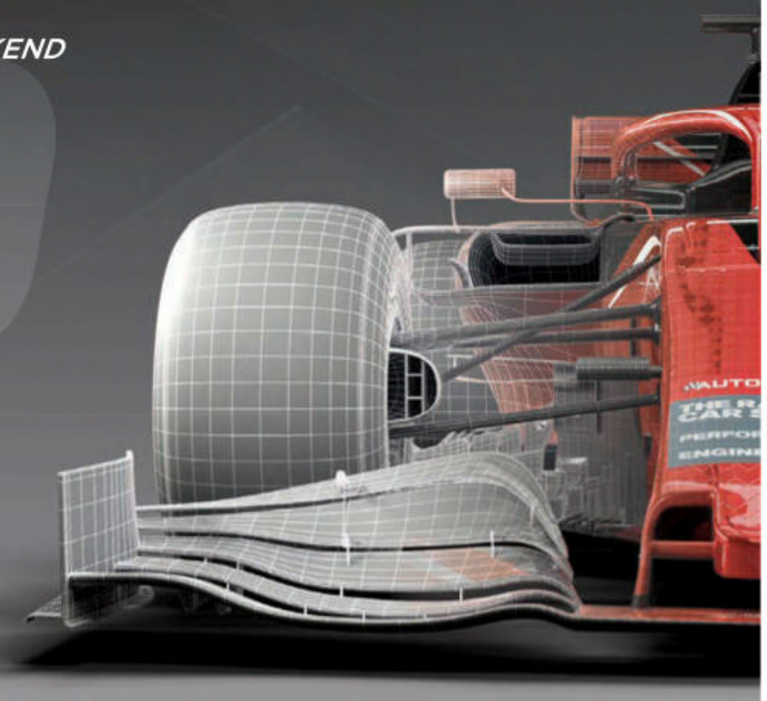

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COMMENT

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Bahrain win for Conway, Lopez and Kobayashi has set up a tense World Endurance finale

CONWAY ON THE CUSP – AGAIN

Another win for the Toyota Gazoo Racing team in Bahrain last weekend has helped move Michael Conway – and team-mates Kamui Kobayashi and Jose Maria Lopez – to the verge of a second World championship title.

They have a 15-point lead over team-mates Sebastien Buemi, Brendon Hartley and Kazuki Nakajima as the series heads to its finale on the Sakhir circuit this weekend with an eight-hour competition.

In truth, Toyota only had itself to beat this season. The two GR010s are head and shoulders better than anything else out there, and the intra-team rivalry has been the only thing that has injected a bit of excitement into the competition.

While Lewis Hamilton might be grabbing the big headlines by fighting for another title in Formula 1, Conway's achievements in long-distance racing are just as meritorious and should not be overlooked. He is a champion worthy of shouting about – although the humble Kent-born racer might not do the shouting himself

The World Endurance Championship is in a mix at the moment as the landscape for long-distance racing alters. The Hypercar era has got off to a rocky start with very few entries but there are plenty of programmes being drawn up in the background. The future might look healthy, but it will take a while to spark into life. It has always been the case that sportscar racing is cyclical, and the upturn can't come soon enough to revive the category.

Our guest in the Q&A hotseat this week is title-winning rally driver Louise Aitken-Walker. While the intention behind the W Series is to be applauded in its efforts to widen the net in terms of gender, Aitken-Walker had no such benefit to her career. She went toe-to-toe with the sport's best and emerged ahead more often than not. Her fascinating interview starts on page 20.

Elsewhere, Graham Keilloh runs the rule over the British GT championship season just gone, which produced some epic racing, unearthed some genuine stars and featured a last-gasp fight for the silverware. Keilloh also looks back at the GB3 season, where Zak O'Sullivan marked himself out as a star of the future.

Also, don't forget to check out page 15 to find out who has made the shortlists for the first ever Motorsport News Awards. You can see who is battling for honours and you can also find out how to make your voice heard with a vote for the National Racing Driver of the Year and the National Rally Driver of the Year. Get voting now and find out the results in our next issue, out on November 11.

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MOTORSPORT NEWS

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RACING NEWS

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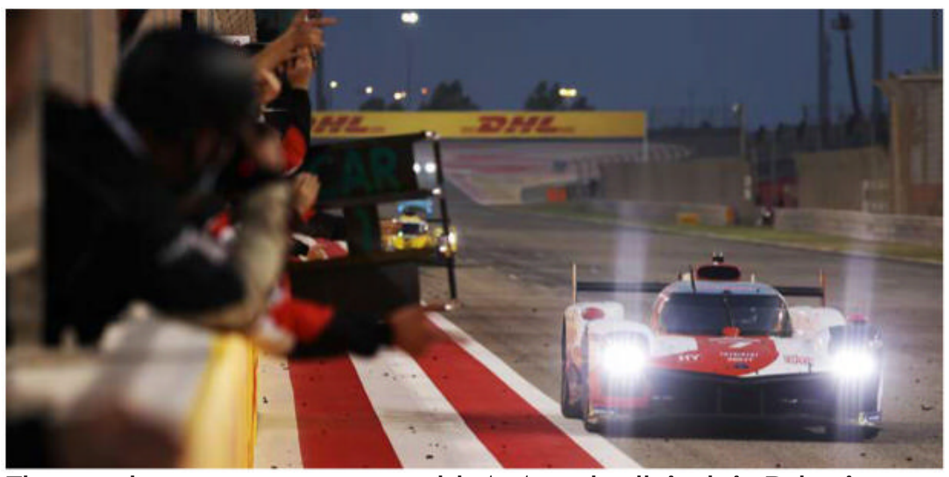


The number seven crew were able to topple all rivals in Bahrain

Lopez (l), Kobayashi and Conway (r) celebrate

TOYOTA SEALS MAKES ENDURANCE TITLE AS DRIVERS CONTINUE WEC FIGHT

Final-round showdown for Japanese squad's intra-team battle in the Bahrain desert this weekend

By Matt James

Toyota secured a third successive teams' trophy – and the first in the Hypercar era – in the World Endurance Championship following a dominant performance in the latest round at the Bahrain International Circuit last weekend.

Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and Jose Maria Lopez sealed a relatively untroubled victory in the six-hour race at the Sakhir venue. They had a grip advantage over the sister machine of Sebastien Buemi, Brendon Hartley and Kazuki Nakajima and finished 50s clear of the sister TGR010 Hybrid machine. The two Japanese cars were a lap ahead of the Alpine of Andre Negrao, Nicolas Lapierre and Matthieu Vaxiviere.

The season will conclude with an eight-hour race at the same circuit this weekend. Conway, Kobayashi and Lopez – who have won the last three races in succession including the Le Mans 24 Hours – lead the standings by 15 points from the sister machine.

Conway said: "I'm very happy with the win; it's good to get maximum points and secure the World championship for the team.

"It was a great job by all the crew, and my team-mates performed really well all day. In my stint it was a case of managing the tyres from the start, but it all worked out well. It's a positive day for us in the drivers' championship but it's still all to play for next week, so we need to work hard to clinch it."

In the highly competitive LMP2 division, Le Mans winners Robin Frijns, Ferdinand von Habsburg and Charles Milesi prevailed and they have taken the lead of the drivers' standings in their WRT Oreca.

Porsche easily outpaced Ferrari in the first of the Bahrain encounters

PORSCHE AND FERRARI SCRAP OVER GT HONOURS

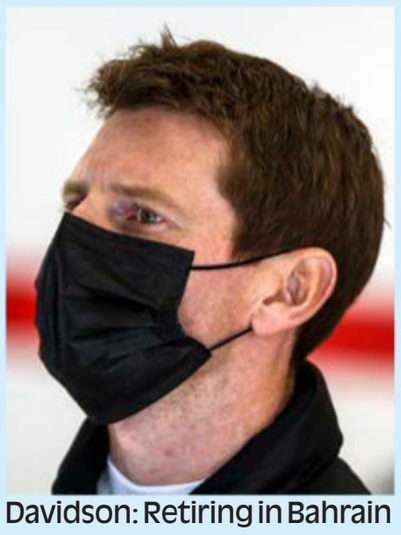
The tooth-and-nail fight between Porsche and Ferrari for GT honours in the World Endurance Championship will go down to the wire after the German firm took another victory in Bahrain last weekend.

Kevin Estre and Neel Jani won the race in the desert ahead of the sister Porsche GT entry of Gianmaria Bruni and Richard Lietz while the AF Corse Ferrari 488GTEs were hamstrung by a Balance of Performance tweak before the start of the race and could only finish third. The leading car was in the hands of Alessandro Pier Guidi and James Calado.

The result means that Estre and Jani have moved to within one point of table-toppers Calado and Pier Guidi with just this weekend's eight-hour race at the Bahrain track remaining. Briton Calado hit out at the tweaks to the Balance of Performance changes and told autosport.com that the changes have effectively "handed the title to Porsche on a plate".

"We lacked so much power that there was nothing more we could do: this isn't a fair fight for a World championship," said Calado. "As a team we've worked so hard to find a tenth here and a tenth there, but then they take more than a second away from you with a decision like this."

● AF Corse has confirmed it will tackle the LMP2 division running an Oreca chassis next season before stepping into the Hypercar arena with Ferrari's new challenger.



Davidson: Retiring in Bahrain

DAVIDSON TO RETIRE FROM TOP-FLIGHT MOTORSPORT

Briton Anthony Davidson has announced that he will step down from front-line driving after the final round of the World Endurance Championship in Bahrain this weekend.

The 2014 World Endurance Championship winner has been racing in the LMP2 division of long-distance motorsport since leaving Toyota at the end of 2017. The 42-year-old, an F1 driver with Super Aguri, BAR and Minardi, has also enjoyed a successful broadcasting career with Sky Sports on its grand prix coverage.

The Formula Ford Festival winner in 2000 wrote on Twitter: "One more [WEC race] to go… which I've decided will also be my final race as a professional racing driver. It's been an incredible and unforgettable journey and I thank all those involved along the way."

Davidson was part of a golden generation of British driving talent – nicknamed the Brat Pack – which came up through karting at the same time as talents such as Indy 500 winner Dan Wheldon and F1 World champion Jenson Button.

HAMILTON WANTS MORE USA TRIPS FOR F1

World champion Lewis Hamilton has given his backing to a third Formula 1 race in the USA if the grand prix calendar expands further.

F1 bosses recently announced a record-busting 23-race calendar for the 2022 season that includes a round at the Circuit of the Americas in Austin, Texas, as well as a new street track in Miami, Florida.

Hamilton, who finished second in Austin, said that he would not be against a third round in North America to help spread the global impact of F1.

The 36-year-old said: "The US GP is fantastic and [it] is such a huge country, having just one race here isn't enough to really to be able to tap into the sporting culture here and encapsulate the fans and get them on a journey with us.

"I think definitely we need at least to have two but there are so many great cities to have a grand prix and if they are going to have one Miami is going to be incredible, as is Austin, I don't know where they will have the next one but I am not opposed to that.

"I think it is quite cool having these kind of continent or mini championships in these continents, I think that is not a bad thing for the sport."

Hamilton thinks that F1 could benefit from more American races

WEC run: Chadwick (l) and Powell

CHADWICK AND POWELL GET WORLD ENDURANCE ROOKIE RUN

W Series battlers Jamie Chadwick and Alice Powell will both test a World Endurance Championship car in Bahrain next week as part of the category's traditional rookie test.

Newly crowned double W Series title winner Chadwick and runner-up in the standings Powell, will share a Signatech-run Richard Mille-backed Oreca 07-Gibson.

Richard Mille has run an all-female crew, comprising Sophia Floersch, Beitske Visser and Tatiana Calderon, in this year's LMP2 competition.

Chadwick has a background in GT racing and won the British GT4 crown in 2014. Powell has previously raced a sportscar in the USA.

As well as those two, Sebastien Ogier will also take part in the five hours of running at the wheel of a factory Toyota GR010 as he considers his future options. The Frenchman, the World Rally Championship leader, is expected to take part in a slimmed-down roster of WRC rounds next season, leaving him free to take up other opportunities.

STAR GUEST MORENO HAS FRUSTRATING FESTIVAL

The returning 1980 winner enjoys landmark event despite on-track woes while Magnussen and Lind make final

Photo: Gary Hawkins

Moreno had "a fantastic time"

By Graham Keilloh

Roberto Moreno had a frustrating time on track competing in the landmark 50th Formula Ford Festival with a Van Diemen RF80 similar to that in which he won 1980's event.

In his first professional race since the early 2000s, ex-Formula 1 driver Moreno was on course to progress from his heat to Sunday's semi-final. But late on he was spun at Druids by Lewis Fox, and Moreno's momentarily stranded RF80 caused the race to be ended early which meant he started a 12-lap progression race from near the back of the 24-car field, needing a top-six finish to qualify.

And therein Moreno again hit ill luck, with a multi-car incident in front of him causing a grassy excursion at Surtees. He finished ninth but was able to take part in Sunday's historic final. However that race was short as Moreno got beached in the gravel at Turn 1.

Moreno told Motorsport News: "We had a fantastic time this weekend. The event for us was us being united together with Micky Galter the mechanic that was with me on my success then [in 1980]; Jonathan Lewis made the car all the same, prepared it really well. I'm very happy to be able to be part of that."

Danish pair reached final

His fellow star guests 1992 Festival winner Jan Magnussen and 2010 winner Dennis Lind had a happier time, the uncle and nephew making the final and finishing 11th and ninth respectively, with new British GT champion Lind finishing just 2.3 seconds behind the winner. Both want to return next year.

YOUNG STAR MILLS RUES LOST VICTORY AFTER SMASH

Tom Mills has expressed frustration being removed innocently in an early-race Formula Ford Festival final multi-car smash that he felt cost him victory.

The 16-year-old son of his Kevin Mills Racing team boss was caught up when twice Festival winner Niall Murray and Oli White collided disputing second place approaching Druids, and took Mills out with them. Stewards took no action after concluding it was a racing incident.

Mills told Motorsport News: "Just dirty drivers. They took out an innocent bystander. One could have backed out and the other could have not driven right. I think I would have won that. Without that I was quickest."

White's Souley Motorsport boss Brain Soule told MN: "[White was] just coming back across to cover Murray off and Murray just didn't lift out. It's frustrating."

Murray told MN: "[It was] more a racing incident than anything. Just one of them things in the Festival where we were close. I was up the inside of him and he came across a bit too much. I had a chat with Oli, he didn't do it maliciously. He said to me that he didn't know I was there. It was his own mistake but I wouldn't be too pissed off at him."

Mills (l) and Murray (c) left the final in a spectacular smash

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RACING NEWS

Photos: Chris Overend and Solent University students, Jakob Ebrey, Motorsport Images

Trundley and Morgan are set

All-disabled Team Brit takes its latest step with McLaren 570S competing in British GT

TEAM BRIT CONFIRMS BRITISH GT4 ENTRY AS LATEST STEP TO LE MANS

The all-disabled squad and motorsport accessibility leader confirms a two-year programme starting with a McLaren 570S

By Graham Keilloh

Team Brit has confirmed it will contest next season's British GT championship with an adapted McLaren 570S GT4 driven by its existing Britcar competitors Bobby Trundley and Aaron Morgan.

Team Brit is the UK's leading motorsport programme for drivers with physical and psychological disabilities and aims in 2024 to become the Le Mans 24 Hours' first all-disabled entry.

The team has now confirmed its latest step on this journey: an intended two-year British GT programme built initially around GT4 with the intention to acquire a GT3 machine next year.

The team earlier this year confirmed its aim to graduate to British GT for 2022.

Trundley, diagnosed with severe autism as a child, and Morgan, a paraplegic following a motocross accident, finished fourth overall in this year's Britcar standings driving a previous-generation Aston Martin Vantage GT4.

With that car no longer eligible for British GT, the team has switched to a modified McLaren 570S GT4 featuring team-designed hand controls that enable Morgan to race on equal terms.

Team Brit founder Dave Player said: "This is a milestone moment for our team and something we have worked tirelessly to achieve.

"Our plans have always been bold, ambitious and beyond belief for many, but we know we will achieve our goal of reaching Le Mans.

"On top of that, we are making changes to motorsport that are crucial for true accessibility.

"Next year we aim to acquire our GT3 car which we will race in British GT and European Le Mans in 2023 before aiming for Le Mans in 2024."

White not fine with his fines

WHITE NOT ALRIGHT AFTER BRITISH GT FINES

Ginetta GT4 Supercup Pro-Am champion Colin White was unhappy with the fines he accumulated during his weekend sampling the British GT championship last month.

White entered a new CWS Racing Ginetta G56 alongside Mike Simpson at the Donington Park season closer ahead of a possible 2022 full-time entry. He got a £300 fine for passing the chequered flag twice in qualifying and £250 for being late to a briefing.

He told Motorsport News: "There's no repeater flag; I'd radioed in and didn't get a reply, so you have no knowledge what's going on.

"If they're trying to encourage people to come into this formula they need to do a far better job. I've done enough racing worldwide to know that you don't normally get treated like this.

"If [the fines] can be ironed out then we'd be interested in doing it [full time]. It's potentially a lot of cars [joining]. I could fly anywhere in the world for £550."

British GT race director Peter Daly however told MN: "If I don't apply the regulations correctly for everything then we're letting down 51 [other] drivers. And while I've got some empathy with Colin I was quite pragmatic, it was either right or wrong.

"It is every racing driver's responsibility to recognise flags. A briefing needs to take place on time; people have very busy schedules."

GT4 SUPERCUP CONDENSED IN 2022

Ginetta has revealed the provisional calendars for 2022 for its GT4 Supercup, Ginetta Junior, GT5 Challenge and GT Academy contests.

The GT4 Supercup, using the upgraded G56 in 2022, will once again appear solely at British Touring Car Championship events though next year has a smaller seven-event and 20-race calendar – down from eight and 23 respectively.

It misses 2022's opening BTCC event to give more time to test new cars and to avoid British GT clashes.

Ginetta Junior also once again is solely a BTCC support, with its nine-event itinerary only missing BTCC's Oulton Park mid-June event so drivers can focus on exams.

The GT5 Challenge will appear at three BTCC rounds, up from two this year, plus four British GT meetings.

The entry-level GT Academy in its second campaign will with its five-event calendar once again appear primarily with British GT and will again appear at one BTCC meeting, this time at Oulton.

GT4 Supercup's 2022 season start is pushed back to give more time to test

Britcar will run British Endurance category

BRITCAR GETS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP STATUS

Club-level endurance organiser Britcar has been granted full Motorsport UK-sanctioned status for 2022 meaning that from next year it will run the British Endurance Championship.

Britcar boss Claire Hedley said: "Whilst we accept the responsibility and kudos that administering a National championship involves, we aim to retain the core values that have made Britcar a continuing success over a considerable number of years."

The British Endurance Championship's provisional dates for 2022 were also revealed, with its six-event calendar starting on the Silverstone Grand Prix circuit on March 12 and concluding with two Donington Park meetings, the second on the Grand Prix layout on October 22.

GINETTA JUNIOR RUNNER-UP McNEILLY RETURNS IN 2022

Ginetta Junior runner-up Liam McNeilly will return to the contest with Fox Motorsport in 2022 when he aims to go one better and claim the championship.

The 15-year-old took five victories among 13 podium finishes with Fox this season, and will remain for 2022 in what the team hopes will be an expanded four-car line-up.

McNeilly will first tackle the Ginetta Junior's 2021 four-race winter series at Brands Hatch on November 13-14, where he will partner regular team-mate Maurice Henry plus new recruit Jacob Hodgkiss, who joins Fox for the winter series plus 2022's full championship.

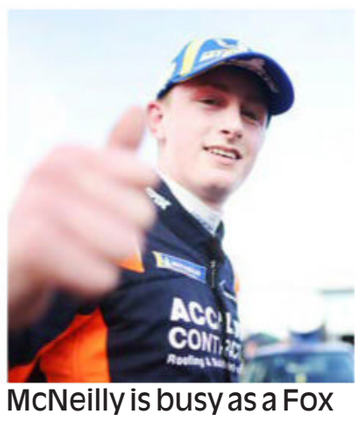
Hodgkiss, 14, completed his rookie Ginetta Junior campaign this year in a single-car Race Car Consultants effort, taking 11 points finishes.

One seat remains available at Fox for the winter series.

McNeilly said: "I've had an amazing season in Ginetta Juniors that has gone way beyond even my wildest expectations. I was 10th and 11th at the first round, at which point my target was one podium.

"Because of where my 16th birthday falls in the year, I won't be able to step up to a senior racing series until midway through 2022, so it makes perfect sense to stay in Juniors.

"There are two main targets: to win the championship and try and use the experience I've gained to help my team-mates challenge for race wins."



McNeilly is busy as a Fox

LANDMARK WALTER HAYES TROPHY NEARING A 100-STRONG ENTRY

Silverstone's end-of-year FF1600 showpiece has its own landmark to celebrate and it own famous names

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

White (94) will seek to defend his Hayes crown

With the return of Hayes spectators the BRDC grandstand's "football crowd atmosphere" will once again be a feature

TIMETABLE

Walter Hayes Trophy, Silverstone, November 6-7

TIME	EVENT
Saturday	
0900hrs	Heat 1 Qualifying
0922hrs	Heat 2 Qualifying
0944hrs	Heat 3 Qualifying
1006hrs	Heat 4 Qualifying
1133hrs	Heat 1 Race - 8 Laps
1223hrs	Heat 2 Race - 8 laps
1248hrs	Heat 3 Race - 8 laps
1313hrs	Heat 4 Race - 8 laps
1418hrs	Janet Cesar Trophy (Pre '93 cars) Race - 8 Laps
1443hrs	Carl Hamer Trophy (Pre '82 cars) Race - 8 Laps
Sunday	
0900hrs	Progression Race - 10 laps
1020hrs	Last Chance Race - 10 laps
1125hrs	Semi Final 1 - 12 laps
1200hrs	Semi Final 2 - 12 laps
1415hrs	Janet Cesar Memorial Trophy Final - 12 laps
1445hrs	Carl Hamer Trophy Final - 12 laps
1515hrs	WHT Grand Final - 15 laps

DRIVERS TO WATCH

Walter Hayes Trophy

DRIVER	CAR
Oli White	Medina JL17
Michael Moyers	Spectrum 011c
Rory Smith	Medina MS18
Warren Hughes	Royale RP26
Cam Jackson	Van Diemen RF90
Matt Cowley	Van Diemen RF15
Luke Cooper	Swift SC20
Kelvin Burt	Van Diemen RF80
Tom Mills	Spectrum 011c
Neil Maclennan	Spectrum 014c
Joey Foster	Firman RFR2021
Chris Middlehurst	Van Dieman LA10

By Graham Keilloh

This weekend's Walter Hayes Trophy end-of-season Formula Ford event at Silverstone is set for around a three-figure entry as the annual showpiece marks its 20th anniversary.

While last weekend's 50th running of the Formula Ford Festival has commanded much attention, the Silverstone national circuit's Formula Ford contest is set for an entry close to that of the Festival.

The Hayes also, just like the Festival, has well-known racers joining the regulars, which in the Hayes' case are Warren Hughes and Kelvin Burt. They are entered in a Jonathan Lewis effort, as Roberto Moreno was at the Festival, and Burt will pilot the same Van Diemen RF80 that Moreno raced at Brands Hatch.

Plus the Walter Hayes Trophy, also like the Festival, has a landmark to celebrate as this year's running will mark 20 years since the first event.

Organiser and founder James Beckett told Motorsport News: "We'll be around the three-figure mark [for the entry], maybe just above it.

"The entry is headed by Oli [White], who won it last year so he'll carry the number one. You've got all the usual suspects, Joey [Foster], Rory Smith, Chris Middlehurst.

"It'll be good to see Warren in a Formula Ford again, he's somebody I've tried numerous times to do the Hayes before, he used to race as team-mate to Neil Cunningham so there was always a bit of a jest about them both doing the Hayes.

"It [20 years ago] seems a long time ago," Beckett added. "Originally it was a one-off race at what was the International Historic Festival which was an August bank holiday weekend event. Race one of that historic festival was the Walter Hayes Trophy for pre-'72 Formula Fords. It was the next year that it became a race for all ages of Formula Ford but it was just a one-off race at the BRDC Winter Warmer meeting.

"So it was year three, in 2003, when that meeting, it always took place at the beginning of November, I changed the name of that to fully become the Walter Hayes Trophy.

"That's when it went from 46 cars to 84 to 126 to 164 in straight bounces; 2005 was the largest Hayes there's ever been. That took a lot of effort.

"Roger Lane-Nott was secretary of the BRDC and was really supportive of the Hayes, and in fact he drove in it himself in 2004. It was always in the back of my mind [to make it an annual event]. Since 1972 the BRDC and Silverstone had their own Formula Ford championship, so I see the Walter Hayes and always did as a celebration of what was great about Formula Ford at Silverstone."

This weekend's Hayes also includes the return of trackside spectators, and with it the event's famous BRDC grandstand atmosphere. "I've been really proud when a couple of times in Motorsport News the BRDC grandstand has won the atmosphere of the year," Beckett noted, "that's really tickled me pink because it does have a real football crowd atmosphere in there, and it was certainly lacking last year."

EARLY BRITISH F4 TITLE A SURPRISE TO REES

Newly crowned British Formula 4 champion Matthew Rees did not realise he had sealed the title a race early after finishing what transpired to be Brands Hatch's championship-deciding contest.

The 16-year-old JHR Developments driver entered the Brands triple-header finale only 12 points ahead of second-placed Matias Zagazeta of Argenti, but difficulties for Zagazeta in the first two races meant Rees's two fifth places made him uncatchable with one race remaining.

Rees said: "Getting out the car [was when I found out], because I had no idea what was going on until that point. It was when Liam [Hewitt, mechanic] came up to me and said 'well done mate you've had a fantastic year', I was like 'why?' And he explained it and I was like 'that was better than I was expecting'."

This season also was the first time a team has taken British F4's drivers', teams' and rookies' title treble. "It's been really emotional for the entire team because we came so close in '16 and '18 with Sennan [Fielding] and with Ayrton [Simmons]," Rees added. "Paul Leach was actually crying."

Rees and JHR took first treble

Rees is unsure of his plans for 2022. "We're keeping our options open, I'm open to ideas. F3, Regional, maybe even FIA F3."

FOUR GB3 TEAMS AMONG THE EIGHT EXPECTED ENTRANTS FOR NEW GB4

Eight junior single-seater teams including four current GB3 squads have been confirmed as expecting to field cars in MotorSport Vision's new GB4 championship.

Hillspeed confirmed its plans for a two-car entry shortly after the affordable single-seater contest was launched in September, and it has now been joined as potential entrants by fellow GB3 teams Arden, Elite Motorsport and Fortec Motorsports, plus by former BRDC British Formula 3 outfit JHR Developments.

Running in GB4 and GB3 simultaneously is intended as a GB4 selling point as its Tatuus F4-T014 chassis allows teams to use 80% of the same spares across the two contests. Also, aside from its early-April season opener, all GB4 rounds run at the same meetings as GB3 in 2022.

MSV boss Jonathan Palmer told Motorsport News: "By running alongside GB3 there are considerable economies of scale here; also management wise, personnel wise. Trying to put efficiencies into these things it's what I enjoy doing. The concept's very popular."

In addition Formula Ford squads Kevin Mills Racing and Oldfield Motorsport, plus Richardson Racing, intend GB4 efforts.

The championship added that several other teams are expected to join in 2022, with "serious interest from potential entrants with backgrounds in single-seaters and sportscars".

HIGH, WIDE AND HANDSOME...

The new Brian Jones Memorial Trophy, awarded for the first time to last weekend's winner of the Formula Ford Festival's historic final, was unveiled last week. The popular 'Voice of Brands Hatch' commentator Jones died in early 2021, and the trophy was commissioned by Festival organiser the British Racing and Sports Car Club with the Jones family's blessing. Festival enthusiast Jones' signature 'High, Wide and Handsome' phrase features on the silverware.

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Toyota man doubles up as Sutton zeroes in on BTCC crown P28
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Landmark result for Merc's star as he denies Norris a maiden win
LEWIS HAILS A MAGICAL MOMENT AS HE HITS A CENTURY
By Matt James
Lewis Hamilton has hailed his rivals after landing his 100th grand prix win in Russia on Sunday, snatching the victory from fellow Brit Lando Norris.
From pole position, McLaren man Norris seemed set to take his maiden victory until a late rain shower left him slithering off the circuit. Hamilton had been called in by his Mercedes team and swapped tyres. He was able to hunt down Norris and take the race win in the dying moments.
Hamilton, who finished one place ahead of his title rival Max Verstappen, says the 100-win benchmark is something he finds hard to believe.
The seven-time champion said: "It's a magical moment. I could only ever have dreamed of still being here and having this opportunity to win these races and get to drive against such phenomenal talent this late in my career and to continue to building with Mercedes. I'm so proud of everything we've done, not only on track but also off."
Full report, p4
Special feature: Lewis's best wins p30
Lewis has achieved his big target
Hamilton left it late to pounce for his 100th win
REPORT
EDWARDS TOPS A DRAMATIC TRACKROD
Volkswagen man back in the title mix with victory p18
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RALLY NEWS

BREEN MISSES MONZA DUE TO HYUNDAI TIES

New M-Sport recruit to sit out final round in Italy as he awaits new job

Photo: Hyundai Motorsport, mcklein-imagedatabase.com

Farewell: Hyundai has seen the back of Breen

Breen will now work towards his debut with the M-Sport squad

By Graham Lister

Craig Breen won't be getting a head start to his career as an M-Sport Ford World Rally Team driver out of loyalty to his former employer Hyundai.

It emerged last month that the Irishman had been linked to a Rally Monza drive with the British team in one of its current Ford Fiesta WRCs.

But the final WRC counter headlined by the current-era World Rally Cars will go ahead from November 18-21 without Breen and co-driver Paul Nagle on the entry.

"It's a no for Monza," Breen told WRC.com, the World Rally Championship's official website. "I'm completely focused on what I'm doing with the 2022 car and, anyway, there's no way I could go to Monza with M-Sport and potentially take points away from Hyundai – that would go completely against the grain."

It means that Breen's last WRC appearance prior to the start of the Rally1 regulations coming on stream on January's Monte Carlo Rally was Rally Finland at the start of October.

However, aside from his loyalties to Hyundai, Breen believes that switching focus to driving M-Sport's Ford Puma Rally1 only will help him in the long run.

"I see it as an advantage that I've stopped with the current World Rally Car and all of my attention is now directed towards getting settled into the Puma," Breen said. "It's the understanding of trying to harvest the energy and trying to do the re-gen all the time. Driving a rally car at 200kph in the woods takes all the capacity in my brain and now you're having to drive at the same speed and still find places to do the re-gen and get yourself a bit of a boost.

"The other guys are going to be jumping in and out of the current car and then doing some testing in Rally1 – that's not the same for me. The most important thing for me [is] to get switched on for 2022 and understand completely how to use the hybrid to the best of its capability. It's going to be a whole new sport."

Breen has been testing the Puma on gravel and asphalt in recent weeks.

Mikkelsen has heralded the competition in the European battle

MIKKELSEN HERALDS TOUGH EUROPEAN CROWN WIN

Andreas Mikkelsen said it was harder to win the European Rally Championship than the WRC2 category in the World championship after he claimed both titles in the space of seven days last month.

Norwegian Mikkelsen became WR2 champion on Rally Spain – despite not contesting the Salou round – after results went in his favour. Sixth place on Rally Hungary the following week was then enough to become European champion.

"I thought before the season it was going to be harder to win ERC rallies than WRC2 rallies," the 32-year-old said. "Looking back at the season I stand behind that. The pace and the speed the guys are doing in the ERC is really high and you really need to push to the limit if you want to fight for the win."

Co-driven by Brit Elliott Edmondson (see story, right), Mikkelsen was largely assured of the ERC crown prior to the Tarmac-based Rally Hungary courtesy of a 71-point lead.

With title rivals Miko Marczyk classified second and Efren Llarena fourth, Mikkelsen's sixth gave him the points he needed to take the crown in a Toksport WRT-run Skoda, the same team behind Chris Ingram's ERC title triumph in 2019, also on Rally Hungary.

Rally1 cars: new systems

CAMERAS ON RALLY1 CARS TO DETECT FANS

Rally1 cars competing in next season's World Rally Championship will be fitted with Artificial Intelligence Safety Cameras (AISC).

They will help to identify where spectators are standing on stages, in case it's a dangerous location, and other potential problems.

The FIA Innovation Fund is bankrolling the AISC development and installation. The use of the cameras will be mandatory.

Crew-facing High-Speed Cameras (HSC), currently in use in all Priority 1 cars in the WRC and which help to determine what happens to a crew in the event of an accident, will now be recommended rather than mandatory to allow for the AISC roll-out.

TITLE-WINNING BRIT EDMONDSON AIMING FOR WRC RETURN

Elliott Edmondson celebrated guiding Andreas Mikkelsen to the ERC title on Rally Hungary last month by underlining his desire to return to the World championship in the new-for-2022 Rally1 category.

Edmondson last competed in the sport's top level on Arctic Rally Finland in February when he co-drove Gus Greensmith to ninth overall.

After Greensmith dropped Edmondson in favour of the more experienced Chris Patterson, the 27-year-old was without regular employment until Mikkelsen recruited him to co-drive on the Acropolis Rally, which started a three-event winning streak and also included the ERC's Portuguese double-header.

"Who knows what will happen but both [Mikkelsen and me] have the aim of getting back into the WRC properly, full time," said Briton Edmondson.

Of his partnership with Mikkelsen and the input he's made and helping the Norwegian become WRC2 and ERC champion in the same season, Edmondson said: "I hope the results speak for themselves. They have been a really successful few rallies but there are a whole host of reasons why the results have started to come [for Mikkelsen].

"I hope I played my part and it's really been really enjoyable creating this partnership. It's working really well and hopefully there's more to come."

BRIT ARMSTRONG BUOYED BY 2021 PACE DESPITE TITLE LOSS

Jon Armstrong believes that his sense of overachievment in 2021 has helped him get over losing out on the Junior WRC title on Rally Spain last month.

Sami Pajari beat Armstrong in the final-round decider, but the Northern Irishman bounced back by contesting the European championship-counting Rally Hungary the following weekend, as he considers his options for 2022.

Armstrong, who took six stage wins on his event debut, battled M-Sport Poland team-mate Pajari in ERC3 and ERC3 Junior, although the Finn's pursuit of the ERC3 Junior crown meant Armstrong, was always going to have to see cede position to the Finn.

"It's been a very strong year and we've been outperforming what we should be doing," said Armstrong, who is co-driven by Phil Hall. "It's a shame not to win the [Junior WRC] but to get so close is a great achievement and lots of people have recognised that."

Of his plans for 2022 and the thinking behind his Rally Hungary outing, Armstrong added: "We don't know yet what our plans will be next year so we're weighing up options and it's good to get experience of this event and to try to improve my pace as well. And it was nice to be on another rally rather than being sat at home dwelling on things."

"What I do next year is budget dependent and it's so hard to know. Four-wheel drive would be nice but whether that was Rally3 or Rally2 we don't know yet. JWRC will be for Rally3 next year and there's also the ERC. We'll have to wait and see."

Armstrong has learned lessons

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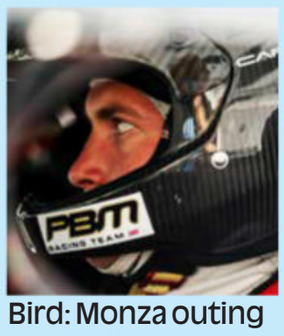
RALLY NEWS



Bird: Monza outing

BIRD TO MAKE WRC DEBUT AT MONZA

Audi GT driver Frank Bird will get his first taste of World Rally Championship action on Rally Monza later this month.

Bird originally targeted a Rally Spain debut, but could not get his Fiesta Rally2 prepared in time.

"We're being chucked right in at the deep end to be honest, but I love the challenge," Bird told MN. "The opportunity's there to do it and it's a massive event. I've got to make my own pacenotes and everything like that which I've never done before. I had a little go last weekend [on Cheviot Stages Rally], we had a recce on the Saturday. I've only ever done three rallies on pacenotes so that's the biggest challenge."

Bird has competed on national UK rallies in his spare time, winning 11 times from 21 starts, but is adamant that GTs remain his primary focus.

"Circuit racing at the moment is my number one and then [we] just fit rallies around it and now we've got a new car we can go anywhere in the world with that," Bird said. "So you never know, maybe in a few years' time it might overtake the racing but I'm not sure yet, we'll see what happens."

SEVENTH MN CIRCUIT RALLY SEASON KICKS OFF AT OULTON THIS WEEKEND

Series boss Spann eager to welcome back fans and competitors for the season ahead

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, SMJ Photography

Champion Kelly returns to defend his MN crown

Spann is looking forward to first post-Covid MN season

By Luke Barry

Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship co-ordinator Darren Spann is both relieved and excited for the new 2021-22 season to be beginning this weekend at Oulton Park.

Due to the precarious nature of coronavirus over the last 20 months, last season's MNCRC ended in July – four months later than normal. That has given series organisers even less time to prepare for the new season.

"I'm just looking forward to getting it all off the ground, getting it running kind of in the vein that it was intended last year and get us back to some form of normality," Spann told MN. "I'm delighted that we got last season in, even with everything that was going on, and we did manage to put a full season together.

"Granted, we didn't get all eight rounds but we did get a good, full season and it gave us worthy champions. This season I'm not counting chickens before they've hatched because I remember this time last year… so I'll just be so relieved to start it on time, when it should do."

Spann is nevertheless upbeat about the prospects for the coming season. "The biggest thing is spectators being allowed back in the paddock. That's the good news story, and that puts the championship back where it should be as a family championship," he added.

The MNCRC will now be exclusively fuelled by Vital Equipment, with the control fuel adding competitor parity.

A new class has been added for two-wheel-drive cars with H-pattern gearboxes, but currently all engine sizes will compete in the same bracket "just to see what the pick-up is like, and if the pick-up is pretty good we'll look at it for how we define the classes next year," explained Spann.

The livestreaming broadcast format will also be altered slightly with fewer stages being broadcast live due to the paddocks opening back up to spectators. The Mellors Elliot Motorsport Proton Iriz R5 prize drive for the series champion also won't return this season, simply because Spann reckons "it's extremely unlikely that the winner won't be in an R5."

SEEDED ENTRY LIST

Neil Howard Stages

SEEDED	DRIVER CO-DRIVER	CAR
1	Mark Kelly/Neil Colman	Ford Fiesta R5
2	Frank Bird/Jack Morton	Ford Fiesta Rally2
3	Kevin Proctor/Patrick Walsh	Ford Fiesta S2000T
4	Joe Cunningham/Josh Beer	Ford Fiesta R5
6	James Self/Ian Davis	Ford Fiesta R5
8	Graham Coffey/TBC	Ford Fiesta S2000T
10	Rob Hughes/Sion Cunniff	Ford Fiesta R5
11	Joshua Davey/Tamsyn Davey	Darrian T90
12	Neil Roskell/Shaun Layland	Ford Fiesta R5
14	Barry Morris/Marc Fowler	Darrian T90 GTR+

CALENDAR

2021/22 MNCRC

DATE(S)	VENUE
Nov 6	Oulton Park
Nov 21	Cadwell Park
Dec 5	Donington Park
Jan 15	Brands Hatch
Jan 29-30	Anglesey
Feb 19	Snetterton
Mar 13	Donington Park
Apr 3	Cadwell Park

PREVIOUS MNCRC CHAMPIONS

MNCRC

YEAR	DRIVER(CAR)
2015/16	James Sharrock (Ford Escort Mk2)
2016/17	Ian Woodhouse (Ford Escort Mk2)
2017/18	Chris West (Peugeot 306 Maxi)
2018/19	Chris West (Peugeot 306 Maxi)
2019/20:	Barry Morris (Darrian T90 GTR+)
2020/21	Mark Kelly (Ford Fiesta R5)

Edwards will face down title rivals on Ulster asphalt

ULSTER RALLY ENTRY LIST WILL BE FULL OF TALENT

All the key players in this year's British Rally Championship have declared their intent to take part in the final round of the series, the Ulster International Rally on November 19-20.

Entries had closed by the time MN went to press. Defending champion Matt Edwards will go head-to-head with fellow Welshman and title rival Osian Pryce, Grampian winner Matthew Wilson and the returning four-time BRC champion Keith Cronin.

Despite this being Cronin's first season back after a lengthy spell on the sidelines, local knowledge might well bolster his challenge, together with a well-deserved reputation for being quick and precise on asphalt.

The line-up for the Junior British Rally Championship features Junior World Rally Championship driver William Creighton renewing his rivalry with Ruairi Bell, Eamonn Kelly and Kyle White.

"The entry to date is very strong indeed," said Ulster Rally's event director, Richard Swanston.

"A strong mix of Irish drivers have also entered (alongside the BRC runners), including the newly crowned Northern Ireland Rally champion Jonny Greer, European Rally Championship regulars Callum Devine and Cathan McCourt, and Hyundai Motorsport Customer Racing Junior driver, Josh McErlean… and then you have [Irish Tarmac champion] Donagh Kelly," he added.

Look out for MN's full preview of the 2021 BRC season finale in next week's Motorsport News

ANDERSON AIMING FOR JUNIOR BRC STEP UP IN 2022

Fraser Anderson is targeting graduation into the Junior British Rally Championship next season after culling his incident-strewn 2021 BRC Academy season early.

Anderson, who turns 19 later this month, lost out to rival Johnnie Mulholland in the class after a season blunted by mechanical issues and driver errors. The Scot is happy with his progress if not his results in his first full season of senior rallying.

"I think by doing BRC I've come a lot further than I would've if I'd stuck to BTRDA for a year," Anderson told MN. "Every single stage where we were going at a competitive speed [without suffering an issue], we won the stage, essentially – apart from one stage on the Nicky Grist where I caught an Escort and that still kind of bothers me!"

The youngster is working on plans to do one more rally this season outside the BRC before moving ahead to 2022. "It's just trying to sell the car and get the budget," he added.

Fast but loose: Anderson planning JBRC attack in 2022

Photos: Rally Gallery, Roger Gale, 5 Nations BRX, Red Bull Content Pool

Pritchard survived to claim third crown

GT racer Bird claimed Cheviot win

BIRD SOARS ON CHEVIOT AS PRITCHARD CLAIMS TITLE

Third place was enough for Ford Focus WRC driver Jason Pritchard to claim his third Motorsport UK Asphalt crown in a row. By Luke Barry

By Luke Barry

Frank Bird swept to his first win in Rally2 machinery on the Cheviot Stages Rally but third place was enough for Jason Pritchard to claim the MSUK Asphalt Rally Championship title for the third time in succession.

In the season finale, Pritchard's biggest title rivals hit problems early on. Mark Kelly led the points ahead of the Cheviot, albeit with a high score to drop, but after a blistering start he went out after three stages when the bottom main crack pulley failed on his Ford Fiesta R5. Damian Cole was also in the hunt and switched from his Skoda to another Fiesta R5 in Northumberland, losing his brakes on SS1 and retiring immediately.

Even Pritchard his trouble, his Ford Focus WRC05 skidding off on SS3 and almost being pitched into a roll, after which he drove a measured event to claim his third straight championship win.

"We had to finish the rally and it was a case of judging how hard to push," Pritchard said. "To win three British Historic and three Asphalt rally titles is an awesome feeling. The question is what do we do next?"

Rally winner Bird was delighted, campaigning the freshly-built Fiesta completed two weeks earlier to win nine of the 12 stages. "I expected maybe a podium but not to win," admitted Bird. "It's the first one this year so it's nice to prove I've still got it."

RESULTS

Cheviot Stages Rally

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Frank Bird/Jack Morton	Ford Fiesta Rally2	52m38s
2	Gordon Morrison/Calum McaPherson	Ford Fiesta R5	+31s
3	Jason Pritchard/Phil Clarke	Ford Focus WRC05	+33s
4	Neil Roskell/John Cope	Ford Fiesta R5	+44s
5	John Stone/Tom Woodburn	Volkswagen Polo GTI R5	+1m14s
6	Stephen Simpson/Patrick Walsh	Ford Fiesta R5	+2m16s
7	Kevin Proctor/Peter Gibson	Ford Fiesta S2000T	+2m37s
8	Joe Cunningham/Christopher Beer	Ford Fiesta R5 2Ltr	+2m40s
9	Mark McCulloch/Michael Hendry	Ford Escort Mk2	+2m41s
10	Richard Clews/Carl Williamson	Subaru Impreza STI	+2m58s

Class winners: B11: Lee Edwards/Will Atkins (Ford Escort); B13: Mark Jasper/Don Whyatt (Ford Escort); B14: Adrian Spencer/Rick Sutcliffe (Subaru Impreza WRX); B15: Pritchard/Clarke; R5: Stone/Woodburn; H3: Chris Ford/Matthew Daniels (Ford Escort)Campbel and Ciaran McAnespy (Ford Escort Mk2)

TOUR OF EYPNT **OCTOBER 31**

ROSKELL WINS TOUR OF EPYNT

The Tour of Epynt closed out the Welsh Tarmac season on the military roads of Mynydd Epynt. With rain lashing the Port Talbot MC's five long stages of some 11 miles apiece.

Through it all came Neil Roskell in his Ford Fiesta R5 to take a maiden outright victory, the Garstang man, co-driven by Ammanford MC's Mark Crisp, was fastest on three stages, with a winning margin of over half a minute from Huw James/Dafydd Evans in a Ford Escort Mk2.

Event sponsor John Stone, with Rhys Stoneman co-driving, got to within a second of Roskell by stage two before a 130 mph spin on SS3 took them backwards into the mire coming downhill to the Llandeilo'r Fan junction – unlucky but equally lucky too, as shortly afterwards the Darrian T9V6 of Andy Fraser / Alan Jones hurtled off the road to land alongside the Volkswagen Polo GTi. Bob Fowden meanwhile had to withdraw his Subaru Impreza WRC, after testing positive for Covid.

Another Epynt ace, Damian Cole, finished fifth, putting his relative lack of pace down to a very wet Epynt not being the best place to get used to his new Fiesta R5+.

Other drama included a big roll on stage one for the Peugeot 106 of Tim Taylor / Dylan Fowler Bishop, going off heavily on the fast right on Burma Road – the car was righted by the crew and marshals.

Although they regained the road and carried on, it was but a brief return, the damage severe. In total, 31 crews finished the event.

Roger Gale

Results

Organiser: Port Talbot MC **When:** October 31
Where: Epynt Military Ranges
1 Neil Roskell/Mark Crisp (Ford Fiesta R5) 51m19s; 2 Huw James/Dafydd Evans (Ford Escort Mk2) +35s; 3 Roger Moran/Den Goulding (Skoda Fabia R5); 4 Steve Wood/Dale Bowen (Ford Fiesta R5); 5 Damian Cole/Andrew Roughead (Ford Fiesta R5+); 6 Jeremy Straker/Ian Meakin (Darrian T90 GTR+); 7 Rob Tout/Mark Broadbent (Mitsubishi Lancer E10); 8 Gareth Bevan/Steffan Evans (Ford Escort RS); 9 Richard Merriman/Kath Curzon (Darrian T90); 10 Mike Williams/Tom Bishop (MG ZR). **Classes:** Stephen Pritchard/Daniel Petrie (Vauxhall Nova); James Evans/Ffion Davies (Ford Fiesta R2); Bevan/Evans; James/Evans; Tout/Broadbent; Roskell/Crisp.

Roskell conquered the conditions for a maiden rally win

THORNE PREPARES 5 NATIONS BRX RETURN AT LYDDEN

Thorne will make rallycross his priority once again after rally forays

British Rallycross Championship podium-finisher Jack Thorne will return to the 5 Nations BRX headline Supercar category in an ex-Albatec Racing Peugeot 208 this weekend at Lydden Hill.

Event organisers have announced that the Lydden event, a part of which is set to be run in the dark under floodlights on Saturday evening, will be a double-header weekend for the headline Supercar category, with separate points scoring rounds on both Saturday and Sunday.

Having sold his Olsbergs MSE-built Ford Fiesta to Andrew Jordan earlier this year to pursue rallying, Thorne has elected to refocus on rallycross into the future.

"I'm really excited to finally be getting back into rallycross at Lydden, it's been a long time coming," said Thorne, who finished on the podium at the Kent circuit in his only start with is previous car in 2019. "I like Lydden Hill, I've had a lot of success there in the past including second last time out, so I can't wait to get back."

FLITNEY BRINGING EX-HOLTE VOLVO TO 5 NATIONS RX

Dominic Flitney will switch to a Volvo C30 Supercar for the remaining rounds of the British Rallycross Championship 5 Nations Trophy this year.

Former Swift Sport Championship driver Flitney has made sporadic appearances in the Supercar category with a self-developed Subaru Impreza since last year, but has now acquired an ex-Frode Holte C30 to continue his tenure in the senior domestic series.

The Volvo has a long competition history dating back to 2010, with Flitney planning to run the car for the first time at Lydden Hill later this month.

"I had such a great time driving the Subaru, as I'm a big fan of the car and it's one that really suited me," said Flitney. "However, to allow me to run nearer the front I needed more horsepower. The Volvo is so well known in rallycross circles, and has always been popular with the fans, not least at Lydden. It will be great to bring another new manufacturer onto the Supercar grids too."

Flitney's Volvo has a long and illustrious history on international events

Advertising enquiries: 01732 446757

RALLY REPORTS

BTRDA RALLY SERIES: CAMBRIAN RALLY BY SIMON GRONOW **OCTOBER 30**

PEARSON CLAIMS CAMBRIAN WIN

Waterlogged Welsh gravel stages and short Tarmac blast provided stern test for BTRDA contenders

Photos: Chicane Media

Pearson topped the BTRDA battlers

Ford Fiesta man Black topped the interclub rally fight

RESULTS

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Garry Pearson/Niall Burns	Skoda Fabia R5	46m28.0s
2	Callum Black/Jack Morton	Ford Fiesta R5	+26.8s
3	Elliott Payne/Patrick Walsh	Ford Fiesta Rally 2	+1m00.2s
4	George Lepley/Tom Woodburn	Mitsubishi Lancer E10	+1m19.1s
5	Mathew Hirst/Declan Dear	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+2m17.6s
6	Charles Payne/Carl Williamson	Ford Fiesta WRC	+4m12.8s
7	Ian Joel/Graeme Wood	Ford Escort Cosworth	+4m22.4s
8	Pat Naylor/Ian Lawrence	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+4m49.0s
9	Owen McMackin/Lee Taylor	Ford Escort Mk2	+6m45.6s
10	Ashley Davies/Sam Fordham	Ford Escort Mk2	+7m38.1s

RF1.4 Andrew Wheatley/Oliver Wheatley (Ford Puma); **RF2.0** Simon Double/Jessica Mitchell (MG ZR 160); **1400S** Steve Black/Paul Morris (Suzuki Swift S1400); **1400C** Kelvin Evans/Jamie Atherton (Nissan Micra); **N3** Brendan Leonard/Glenn Mercer (Ford Fiesta ST); **NR4** Pat Naylor/Ian Lawrence (Mitsubishi Lancer E9); **R2** Tony Simpson/Ian Bevan (Ford Fiesta); **B10** Andy Burnell/Emma Morrison (Skoda Felicia S1600 kit Car); **B11** Ricky Crone/Daniel James (Ford Escort Mk 2); **B12** McMackin/Taylor; **B13** Lepley/Woodburn; **B14** Black/Morton; **H1/2** Ben Smith/Steven Smith (Ford Escort Mk 1 RS 2000); **H3** Steve Bennett/Osian Owen (Ford Escort Mk 2); **H4** Tom Coughtrie/Ian Fraser (Mitsubishi Galant VR4)

After six wet stages in the North Wales forests and one short Tarmac test, it was 2021 Scottish Rally champion Garry Pearson who was first of the BTRDA finishers on the Cambrian Rally.

Running in the National section, Pearson and co-driver Niall Burns followed up their recent Carlisle Stages win with fastest times on five of the tests to finish the day with a comfortable lead in their Skoda Fabia R5.

Second of the BTRDA crews to finish were Cambrian Rally (Interclub) event winners Callum Black/Jack Morton, who were running some new-spec MRF tyres on their Ford Fiesta R5. They finished the day just over 30 seconds in front of the hard-trying Elliott Payne/Patrick Walsh in their Fiesta Rally 2.

Heavy rain in the days preceding the rally had left the stages in a very slippery condition, with pools of water ready to catch out those who were pushing too hard. The conditions didn't worry Pearson, who said "so far, so good, we've had a good run and a few big slides" after setting fastest time on each of the first three tests.

Black was similarly content with his progress in second, saying: "It's all good and getting better with each stage. The car is good and new tyres have changed the handling. It was interesting on the first few corners."

Stage three had been his best, less than a second behind Pearson. Second in the Interclub section at this point were Payne/Walsh who went over a bank in a wet section of SS2, damaging the Fiesta's bumper in the process.

Over the morning stages, George Lepley/Tom Woodburn were never lower than fourth-fastest BTRDA crew, though they found their Mitsubishi Lancer E10 wasn't as nimble as the R5 cars in the tight and twisty stages, with some minor gear selection issues their only concern.

Holding fifth were Mathew Hirst/Declan Dear who had differential pump issues on their Lancer, while Tom Llewellin retired from a top placing after his Mitsubishi Mirage was reported to have lost a wheel. Further gremlins hobbled another Mitsubishi runner when Russ Thompson succumbed to electrical issues on the waterlogged stages.

There would be no let up from Pearson over the second running of the three forestry tests in the afternoon. After setting second fastest time, a second off the pace in Gwydir 2, he retaliated with fastest times through the second attempts at Penmachno and Alwen despite steering issues which left him "fighting with the car," and meant a steady run was required through the short final Tarmac stage. Overall, he was pleased with his afternoon run. "It felt steady, but the times were there," he reflected as he took his third maximum BTRDA points of the year.

Black was equally delighted to hold his position, thereby earning the Interclub outright win despite a puncture in Alwen 2. With the errant rubber replaced, their run to the finish was untroubled: "We got there," he said.

On a charge over the afternoon's tests was Payne, who bettered Pearson through Gwydir and was fastest of the Interclub runners through each of the forestry tests in the afternoon. A couple of minor indiscretions on the final two stages modified the front and rear of his Fiesta Rally 2 slightly, as he emerged as runner up of the Interclub event.

Unfortunately, gear selection proved to be an issue for Lepley at times, resulting in a few minor errors, but he maintained his third position and fourth of the BTRDA runners to finish. "I tried to push," the youngster assured MN. "But it was a big ask to catch the R5s."

Punctures on two of the stages didn't help Hirst, but he was happy to make the finish in the fifth points position in his Lancer. Finishing one place behind were Charles Payne/Carl Williamson, the driver stating the day had been "steady, no major problems," after setting some good times on the later stages in his Fiesta WRC.

Just behind Payne were Ian Joel/Graeme Wood, who were reasonably happy with their day, taking third in class in their Ford Escort Cosworth in the process. As expected, Pat Naylor/Ian Lawrence won class NR4 in their Mitsubishi Lancer E9. The pair were relieved when early intercom issues were resolved; their resulting pace was rewarded with fifth-fastest time on the Twin Lakes Tarmac test.

Fastest of the two-wheel-drive runners were Owen McMackin/Lee Taylor, who were adopting a sensible approach in their Ford Escort Mk2. "We're driving to the conditions and picking our lines," said McMackin.

A cautious run over the last stage sealed a comfortable class win and the Silver Star honours on the day. Finishing second were Ashley Davies/Sam Fordham who endured a couple of tough stages after damaging their Escorts steering on Penmachno 2.

McMakin was the top two-wheel-drive man

Wheatleys can see clearly for RF1.4 victory run

Family pairing Andrew and Oliver Wheatley overcame a fogged-up windscreen and damaged suspension on their Ford Puma before winning class RF1.4 for the second year in succession.

Simon Double/Jessica Mitchell took the RF2.0 win in spite of denting a wing on their MG ZR160.

"It's hard work, I'll tell you," said 1400S pacesetter Steve Black after the morning's stages, "It's real Welsh slippy,"

Following a sensible run in the afternoon, Black and co-driver Paul Morris took the category win in their Suzuki Swift S1400, as Adrian and Mathew Walk took maximum BTRDA 1400C points in their Ford KA despite a puncture on Gwydir 2.

First of the BTRDA Historic crews home were Paul Street/Ian Jones after a good run in their Ford Escort, whilst a quick time through Alwen 2 helped Ricky Crone/Daniel James take the class B11 win in their Ford Escort.

On their first BTRDA outing of the year, Tony Simpson/Ian Bevan were soon back in their stride, as they took a comfortable R2 win in their Ford Fiesta, whilst a much better afternoon run where they "picked our way through the rough bits," resulted in the runner up spot for Sam Bilham/Graham Wild in their similar car.

Steve Black overcame the conditions for 1400S glory

COLUMNIST

DAVID ADDISON

Motorsport has its police in the shape of race officials, but is it time to better police the police?

Understandably, much has been written, discussed and broadcast lately concerning policing and its standards. For all the wrong reasons, policing and who monitors it has been much in the news.

Motorsport has its own, unofficial, police: the race officials who impose the regulations and when the judicial process is involved need to adjudicate. But who polices the police? I'm not going on about whether you agree with a clerk of the course's decision or not, because if a driver doesn't agree he has the option to appeal to the stewards and they can act as a second set of eyes. It's more the decisions being taken by officials that have an immediate outcome.

I'll offer you two examples. First, let's revisit Goodwood's Speedweek last year when a Mini was off at the chicane exit and yellow flags flew. The car in question was close to the edge of the circuit and one expected a red flag to fly. A short while, but not immediately, afterwards, Olivier Hart's Alfa Romeo came out of the chicane, ran wide and collected the stricken Mini. Finally the red flags flew. When the metaphorical dust settled, Hart was excluded from the session and had the usual licence endorsement. OK, so far so good, because he was arguably going too fast under a yellow flag and the proverbial book was lobbed at him. But, hang on a moment, why wasn't the session red-flagged immediately? It's all very well chastising a driver but where was the questioning of the clerk of the course in this? Who asked him why he hadn't thrown the red flag sooner because there was always only going to be one outcome. He could have spared two competitors damage and expense and one the endorsements on his licence.

Second example: a friend of mine is a steward and often presides over SRO races. A few years back, in Bahrain, there was an international GT4 competition in which a driver was instructed to give back a place.

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Motorsport Images

Are standards slipping in race control decisions?

I forget if it was for a track limit offence or yellow flags but it matters not. The timing screens relayed the message and the driver in question did exactly what was required. Out of the first hairpin, he slowed, let his rival past and then outbraked him at the next corner. It was one of those blink-and-you-miss-it moments and the stewards, my friend included, did just that. Still the timing screens screamed that he must give back the place, which he had now done, and then came the black flag as they believed that he hadn't complied with the request. In the end it was only the repeated cries from the commentary box and repeated TV replays that made the stewards take notice of what had happened and the black flag was rescinded. Phew! But just suppose that the driver had responded to the flag as well, needlessly? An error in race control can be shrugged off by the officials but has serious consequences for the competitor. Races, championships, even careers, can hinge on the decisions in race control and should be treated seriously.

Many years ago I remember listening to a group of club racing officials taking delight in keeping a driver who wished to protest hanging on so that his 30-minute window was eventually up and he couldn't pursue his claim. Great. And these people wonder why a number of competitors don't renew their licences.

Somewhere it is written that one shouldn't criticise volunteer officials, be they clerks, marshals or any role. Being a volunteer doesn't abstain you from competence: you can volunteer and be really good at something and equally criticism can, and should, be levied when the mistakes are made. Just as officials can be high-handed and pompous with drivers, no… make that customers… someone should be looking whether officials are doing their jobs adequately as well. The clerk who calls for the safety car and manages to pick up the car in 13th or who fails to call for a red flag when a handful of cars have skated off on oil, for example, has a case to answer. But to whom? Who is policing the police? As it stands, the stewards of a meeting have a role in ensuring the circuit is safe under the circuit licence and are then called upon in the case of any appeals and protests that are referred to them. But that is all on the competitors side. The stewards, as I understand it, aren't overseeing the officials: they aren't asking why that red flag was so late or the safety car procedure was a bugger's muddle.

There are annual seminars for officials and of course they are licenced but that means nothing if they can't do a good job in the heat of the moment. Someone needs to be overseeing officials and making sure that how they are running races and treating competitors is to a high standard. Increasingly, I think we have become sloppy…

Clerk decisions can be appealed to stewards, but what about decisions with an immediate outcome?

Olivier Hart's Alfa Romeo sustained damage

Being a volunteer doesn't abstain you from competence

Advertising enquiries: 01732 446757

HISTORICS

DOWN THE PUB

GEORG HALLAU

Historic racer
Age: 60 Lives: Germany

Hallau: Marco Werner fan

Two-wheeled start
"I actually started out in motocross before I switched to racing Formula Fords. My first acquaintance with historics came through racing modern sportscars. I met up with Peter Schleifer, the man responsible for running Fahrergemeinschaft Historischer Rennsport [FHR]'s CanAm series. I bought his Lola T310, a car that I still own and drive with the greatest pleasure."

He won at Silverstone
"I won the Thundersports race at the 2019 Silverstone Classic with the Lola. On Saturday I finished second in the rain, but on Sunday it was a 45-minute race. The problem was that the Lola's fuel tank is too small – it's just 80 litres, and it burns 2.5 litres-per-minute. So we set the engine up as lean as possible and decided to voluntarily make our mandatory mid-race stop a bit longer. And I still won!"

He loves his F1 car
"The Formula 1 Theodore is so precise and it cuts like a knife through butter. Conversely, the CanAm Lola will rip your head off, with wheelspin in fourth gear! To me, F1 and CanAm are the pinnacles in historic motor racing. And I enjoy driving the LMP2 car. Britec asked me to be the amateur driver next to Marco Werner. I also drove the car at Le Mans and that was a dream come true."

Dijon is a favourite
"I love natural circuits like Dijon. It looks simple but it's actually very hard to go really quick there. I hate circuits that make you brake hard for a corner, turn in and have you accelerate out in first gear. Brno and the Red Bull Ring – two more examples of tracks using the natural flow of the mountains. I also adore the Silverstone Classic – I'll scratch a week from my diary for that."

Werner earns respect
"I'm full of admiration for Marco Werner. He's quick in any type of car, and his precision boggles the mind. With the LMP2, we can compare our data, so I know he's 2.5 seconds quicker than me, every time around, but the mistakes that cost me the time are different each lap. He knows how to translate his feel for the car into actions that will help improve set-up. You won't recognise it's the same car half an hour after he's driven it. He sometimes makes a change and won't tell me, just to see if I notice!"

Photos: Paul Lawrence, Julian Rouse

The Sierras will be back in action again

CONTINUATION ANDY ROUSE-SPEC SIERRAS TO BE SOLD FOR 2022 RACES

Trio of iconic Ford RS500s to be readied using original blueprints

By Paul Lawrence

Three fresh Ford Sierra RS500 Cosworths will be built for sale this winter and endorsed by Andy Rouse.

The continuation cars will be built from original bodyshells to the specification used by Rouse and his team in the British Touring Car Championship in period. The cars will have a £185,000 price tag.

They will be built by Alan Strachan, founder of CNC Motorsport AWS, who worked for Rouse in the RS500 era. The build programme will have access to drawings and data to produce Rouse-specific parts, including the Rouse-designed steel rollcage.

Each car will use a fresh 575bhp Cosworth YB unit with input from original Andy Rouse Engineering engine builder Vic Drake, who produced over 100 RS500 engines in period.

Rouse said: "The RS500 was lots of fun and of all the cars I raced, the Kaliber RS500 is the one I wish I still had today. When Alan told me he had acquired a brand new bodyshell, we came up with the idea to build correct continuation cars just as we did in our Binley workshop. Having seen Alan develop his own engineering business, he was the only person I trusted to build cars that would carry the ARE build plate."

Strachan added: "Demand for competitive Group A machines is rising, enabling access to some of the best motorsport events for correct cars. The cars will all be signed off by Andy, just as we did in period, with the provenance that can only come from the man who engineered and drove the cars to such success."

Dessie Nutt was a major player on the historic rallying scene

Historic rally legend Nutt passes away

The death of Dessie Nutt last week after an illness has robbed historic rallying of one of its most popular characters.

The doctor from Castlerock in Northern Ireland was a hugely successful and experienced driver, best known for his famous Category 1 Porsche 911 which served him so well for 25 years and over 300 rallies.

He rallied from the early 1970s right through to 2019, having started in Minis. In the 911 he won the overall British Historic Rally Championship in 2004 and in 2009, always partnered by Geraldine McBride. His final rally was on the Isle of Man, one of his favourite venues, in the spring of 2019. He was aged 70 when he passed.

As well as being a great competitor who cared passionately about motorsport, Dessie was a true gentleman, a fine raconteur and a good friend to many in the sport. He was also a devoted family man.

Dobie goes back into the forests 30 years on

National rally champion Bill Dobie ended a 30-year break from rallying when he contested the Carlisle Stages in a freshly built historic specification Ford Escort Mk1.

The Scottish veteran, now 75 years old, was a prolific competitor through the late 1970s and 1980s, first in Escorts and then in Opel Asconas and Mantas. He won the Castrol/Autosport National Championship in 1981 with an Escort Mk2 and his last competitive event was the Lakeland Stages in 1990.

The comeback was encouraged by his daughter Eve who was his co-driver for the Kielder foray. Despite dropping a lot of time with a puncture they finished the event and enjoyed the experience.

Dobie enjoyed Carlisle Escort outing

RETURN FOR BOUCLES EVENT NEXT YEAR

The outline details of the 2022 Legends Boucles at Bastogny have been announced for the February 5-6 rally. One of the biggest historic rallies in Europe will run entirely in the Belgian Province of Luxembourg, with 10 asphalt special stages on Saturday and six gravel stages on Sunday. More than 300 entries from across Europe are expected as the event returns after a Covid-induced absence in 2021.

Teenager to tackle Walter Hayes Trophy

Rising Historic Formula Ford star Samuel Harrison will join the SpeedSport Classic Team Merlyn squad for this weekend's Walter Hayes Trophy.

The 17-year-old former karter has shown tremendous pace this season in his Elden Mk8 and will now switch to a Merlyn Mk20 for the knock-out event. If all goes well, the arrangement could continue into next year's Historic FF Championship.

Team boss Mike O'Brien said: "Samuel fitted in very well during testing and was immediately on the pace in both wet and dry conditions. He did a really good job and has impressed me with his pace this season. Our main focus this weekend will be the Carl Hamer Historic FF race."

IN BRIEF

BHRC shake-up
The loss of the Harry Flatters Rally on Epynt will force a rejig of the planned British Historic Rally Championship. The July event has traditionally been a BHRC event but is now being rested due to a lack of volunteer organisers. Originally planned for July 24 next summer, the event has regularly been one of two or three asphalt events on the BHRC schedule.

R.A.C. cash boost
The organisers of the Roger Albert Clark Rally, due to take place on November 25-29, have revealed that the event will deliver a multi-million-pound boost to UK rallying and the regions visited by the five-day event. The UK rally industry will benefit by an estimated £2 million spend from the 150 competitors. This represents the money spent on entering the event, supplies such as fuel and tyres, car preparation, on-event servicing and post-event repairs, replacements and rebuilds.

Awards are near
The finalists for the Royal Automobile Club Historic Awards have been announced ahead of the awards evening on November 25. The competitive event and series/championship of the year have been merged into one award this year and the three finalists are Historic Formula Ford 2000, the Per Ardua Ad Infinitum rally organised by HERO and the VSCC Light Car Race run at Oulton Park in July.

Gongs on offer
Other motorsport finalists for the 2021 Royal Automobile Club Historic Awards include the Historic Rally Festival for 'motoring spectacle', VSCC competitor Dougal Cawley for 'personality of the year' and the 1955 HWM, restored by Brazell Engineering and raced by Gregor Fisken this season, for 'restoration of the year'.

Eifel is back
After an enforced absence of two years, the ADAC Eifel Rallye Festival will return next summer on July 21-23 in the area around Daun in the Eifel Mountains in Germany. Up to 160 cars will take part in the 10th running of the celebration of rallying history, which will mark 50 years of the World Rally Championship. The WRC first ran as a manufacturer competition in 1973.

Onions is ready
After an absence of four or five years, Will Onions is planning a rallying return on the Rallynuts Stages (November 13). Following a recent test in his historic specification Ford Escort Mk2, Onions and co-driver Dave Williams decided it was time to go rallying again and will tackle the Hafren and Myherin based final round of the BTRDA season. Onion was the 2009 BTRDA Silver Star champion.

MOTORSPORT NEWS AWARDS

Photos: Motorsport Images, Jakob Ebrey, Mick Walker

REVEALED! THE NOMINEES FOR THE FIRST MOTORSPORT NEWS AWARDS

As well as your votes, MN is selecting a host of other winners. Here is the lowdown

As the season draws to a close, Motorsport News has got its thinking cap on to unearth the stars of the season and we need your help.

You can find at the bottom of this page how to vote for your National Rally Driver of the Year and National Racing Driver of the Year. Your voice counts and we have been flooded with responses so far. Make sure your opinion is heard.

As well as the public votes, Motorsport News is selecting winners for a host of other awards. You can see the shortlists on this page and our experts will assess and debate the merits of each before coming up with the winners. They will be announced in our special issue on November 11, so make sure you reserve a copy at your newsagents now.

Check out the shortlists on this page, and make sure you log on and vote for your drivers of the year.

MOTORSPORT NEWS AWARDS 2021 in association with CATACLEAN

EVENT OF THE YEAR NOMINEES

- Goodwood Revival (above)
- BTCC Snetterton
- Mull Rally
- Formula Ford Festival
- National Hot Rod World Final
- Neil Howard Stages

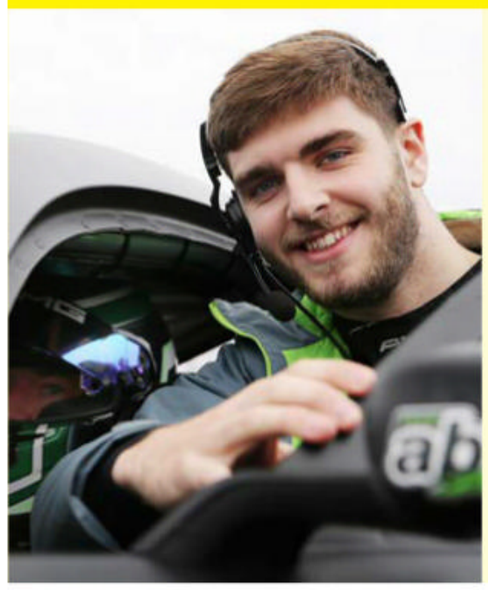
HISTORIC DRIVER OF THE YEAR NOMINEES

- **Patrick Blakeney-Edwards** Pre-War, sports and touring cars
- **James Cottingham** Sportscar all-rounder
- **Cam Jackson** Formula Junior, Historic Formula Ford and Classic Formula Ford
- **Andrew Jordan** Sports, GT and touring cars
- **Michael Lyons** Historic F1 (above)
- **Nick Padmore** Historic F1, sports and touring cars

ORGANISING CLUB OF THE YEAR NOMINEES

- **750 Motor Club** National Racing
- **Bolton-le-Moors Car Club** Neil Howard Stages prime movers (above)
- **MotorSport Vision Racing** National Racing and more
- **Spedeworth** Short oval experts
- **BTRDA** Rally Series and grassroots motorsport
- **Historic Sports Car Club** The historic racing hub

RISING STAR OF THE YEAR NOMINEES



- **Ollie Bearman** GB3 and others
- **James Hedley** British F4
- **Eamonn Kelly** Junior BRC runner
- **Sam Neary** British GT (left)
- **Adam Smalley** Ginetta Supercup
- **Kyle White** Junior BRC

SERIES OF THE YEAR NOMINEES

- **British Rally Championship**
- **British Touring Car Championship**
- **British GT Championship**
- **BTRDA Rally Series**
- **British Hillclimb Championship (above)**
- **MN Circuit Rally Championship**

SPORTING SCENE DRIVER OF THE YEAR

- **Lee Fairhurst** BriSCA F1
- **Tom Harris** BriSCA F1
- **Rob McDonald** National Hot Rods (above)
- **Wallace Menzies** British Hillclimb
- **Ollie O'Donovan** British Rallycross
- **Carl Waller-Barrett** National Hot Rods

TEAM OF THE YEAR NOMINEES

- **Alastair Rushforth Motorsport** Ginetta GT5 team
- **Barwell Motorsport** British GT champion
- **Century Motorsport** British GT4 champion
- **Elite Motorsport** Ginetta king
- **Laser Tools Racing** BTCC champion (above)
- **Melvyn Evans Motorsport** British Rally Championship dominator

NATIONAL RALLY DRIVER OF THE YEAR SHORTLIST

Rhys Yates British Rally Championship stalwart

Mark Kelly MN Circuit Rally champion 2020-2021

George Lepley BTRDA frontrunner

Matt Edwards British Rally Championship favourite

Frank Bird MN Circuit Rally Championship frontrunner

Osian Pryce Leading light in the British Rally Championship

David Bogie Scottish Rally Championship battler and Ford Escort Mk2 exponent

William Creighton Junior rallying battler turning heads with performances

Garry Pearson Versatile frontrunner with wins under his 2021 belt

Jock Armstrong Scottish Rally Championship frontrunner

Yates is on shortlist

TO VOTE: fastcar.co.uk/motorsport-news/national-rally-driver-of-the-year-2021/

NATIONAL RACING DRIVER OF THE YEAR SHORTLIST

Ash Sutton BTCC champion chasing a third crown

Tom Ingram Tin-top favourite who races at the front consistently

Dan Zelos Mini standard setter who has a passion to progress

Dennis Lind Supreme British GT championship racer who has rocked the UK tracks

Yelmer Buurman Ex-F1 tester who is a benchmark in UK sportscars

Zak O'Sullivan Up-and-comer making a mark in GB3

Jake Hill BTCC driver about to flourish in the top flight

Matthew Rees Formula 4 rookie who has turned heads in maiden season

Callum Voisin Ginetta Junior star fighting for the crown despite all the odds

Lorcan Hanafin Porsche race winner mixing it at the front

Sutton has been BTCC star

TO VOTE: fastcar.co.uk/motorsport-news/national-racing-driver-of-the-year-2021/

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FORMULA FORD FESTIVAL REPORT

IN BRIEF

Smith in a spin

Defending Festival champion Rory Smith, who this season has been racing a Formula Atlantic Ralt RT4, had his promising challenge for back-to-back Festival victory in effect ended by spinning out of his sodden semi-final. "It was just a case of going in a bit too hot at Paddock, lost the back end and corrected myself and then ended up in the gravel," he told MN. "[Because of the spray] I approached the corner at a slightly sharper angle than usual."

Gilkes family clash

W Series pilot Megan Gilkes also had a promising Festival ended in a wet semi-final, and the incident also eliminated her brother and Kevin Mills team-mate Nick. "Unfortunately [I got] tagged twice in two corners on the first lap," she told MN. "The first one I did a 360 but managed to keep going, the second one the guy started to lose it, tagged me and that put me in a spin and very unfortunate that the innocent victim was my younger brother."

Gray back to front

Michael Gray, taking part in a Graham Brunton Racing Ray, provided Saturday drama by winning the first progression race after starting at the back of the 24-car field, due to a clutch problem in his heat. "We had 45 minutes to turn it around," Gray told MN. "I was thinking top six, that's all I need [to progress], then it was just picking them off and I was thinking I could win this."

Rivett's revenge

Matt Rivett was the first winner of the Brian Jones Memorial Trophy, winning the historic final in his Van Diemen RF91. He told MN: "A couple of years ago I was beaten by one of the Irish guys in a Mondiale, I had Irish guys in front of me and behind me [this time] and I was so determined to bring it home for the Brits again, because they are so quick, the Irish guys." Rivett also made the overall final and finished 18th.

Morris motivated

Rick Morris, who took part in the first Festival in 1972, was racing as ever in his Royale RP29, and finished 20th, and second in class, in the historic final. His overall semi-final ended with a spectacular Paddock off after contact with British Racing and Sports Car Club chairman Peter Daly. Morris told MN: "Great fun, met lots of mates, what more can you ask? I'm 75 nearly, I'm very happy to be doing it. As long as I'm reasonably competitive I'll continue."

Morris: continuing to race

Sharp and team celebrate triumph

RACE WINNERS

- **Heat 1** Jonathan Browne (Ray GR18)
- **Heat 2:** Joey Foster (Firman 2021)
- **Heat 3:** Max Esterson (Ray GR18)
- **Heat 4:** Niall Murray (Van Diemen BD21)
- **Progression race 1:** Michael Gray (Ray GR10)
- **Progression race 2:** Jack Kemp (Ray GR07)
- **Semi-final 1:** Niall Murray (Van Diemen BD21)
- **Semi-final 2:** Joey Foster (Firman 2021)
- **Historic final:** Matt Rivett (Van Diemen RF91)
- **Last chance race:** Luke Cooper (Swift SC20)
- **Final:** Jamie Sharp (Medina Sport JL17)

SHARP IMPROVEMENTS ENSURE LANDMARK FFORD FESTIVAL WIN

The 20-year-old B-M Racing competitor beats the big names to claim victory in the 50th Formula Ford Festival's dramatic final, by Graham Keilloh

The Formula Ford Festival never was a weekend won by reputations. Nor one of conventional storylines. This time, the landmark 50th running, was in these senses typical.

As for all of the excitement about returning star names in homage to the half-century, victory did not go to one of the establishment. Rather it went to Jamie Sharp in a B-M Racing Medina. The 20-year-old, formerly a British Formula 4 racer, has been a Formula Ford regular in recent times, yet he'd only won one Formula Ford race before the weekend and never in the dry. On this grandest of occasions he put that right.

Sharp led from the front to an extent too, as he topped the opening heat's qualifying order by a whole half-second on the short Brands Hatch Indy layout. But this wasn't a straightforward Festival triumph. Again, something typical for this event...

In the wet first heat, Sharp again was visibly quicker than anyone else in the race. Trouble was he had two offs as well as an incident with Luke Cooper. It said something that, even so, Sharp still finished second just a tenth behind 2019 Festival winner Jonathan Browne.

"I need just to calm down," Sharp admitted to Motorsport News after that opening bout. "I haven't done much running at the front of the field so I just need to get used to that. It was completely my fault, everything was. We've got the pace. We're not far off in the dry but wet would be perfect."

His B-M boss Andy Brickles told MN: "We had a chat about everything, he learnt his lesson from his heat. He reined it in."

Experience counted in two early-Sunday semi-finals run in the wet, and gave us a front row for the final made up of two multiple Festival winners: Joey Foster on pole with Niall Murray alongside. Either surely, from a storyline point of view at least, were appropriate potential victors of this momentous Festival. But as we've said the Festival tends not to work that way.

On a by now (largely) dry track, Foster led the final from the off heading a tight frenetic four-car train. Too frenetic, as the three behind Foster were removed in an accident at the start of lap three.

Murray sought to take the inside line on the run to Druids from second-placed Oli White, who defended. They collided and collected the innocent Tom Mills of Kevin Mills Racing. The 16-year-old Festival debutant Mills, despite receiving medical attention, was OK physically but deeply disappointed. He, and a few others, reckoned that he had shown the pace needed to win.

Foster led again after the resulting safety car period, though he now had Sharp, who'd started sixth, second and right in his slipstream. At Clearways, Foster hit a damp patch that still lingered from the earlier rain and ran through the gravel, letting several cars by. The first of which was Sharp.

Foster told MN: "I'm massively [disappointed], the car was so good in the heat and semi-final. Niall was incredibly fast on that first lap, and he dropped back a bit because he got on the wet stuff, which should have been a key point for me in remembering…

"I could see Jamie behind but I thought I can hold him back. Just going into Clearways got a little bit sideways, got on the power, it usually sorts out the rear, and the rear end because of the angle of the car just caught a wet patch I didn't realise was there. By the time I corrected that was it."

Not that new leader Sharp then had it

> ***"That's the best I've seen Sharp drive"***
>
> ***Andy Brickles***

Multiple-winner Foster (277) led but was caught out by damp patch

Photos: Gary Hawkins

THE FESTIVAL'S STAR TURNS

PASSIONS REMAIN FOR 50TH FORMULA FORD FESTIVAL'S RETURNING STARS

We know that racing drivers cannot help themselves. And so it was with this special Formula Ford Festival's very special star turn, 1980 winner Roberto Moreno driving a similar Van Diemen RF80 to that in which he triumphed 41 years ago.

And for all the air in Moreno's Jonathan Lewis camp of a merry band getting the old boys back together, it was clear they were taking this seriously.

Moreno wasn't sure when he last raced professionally, he guessed 2003, but his old skills were on show as he threw his RF80 – painted in his colours from 1980 – through Brands Hatch's spectacular turns. Sadly, he wasn't rewarded in results, as his weekend unravelled after being bundled out of his Saturday heat by Lewis Fox.

Moreno's frustration, and ergo his competitive edge, was clear afterwards. "It was OK, and then I was punted off," he told Motorsport News. "Somebody hit me in the back, I actually carried his nose with me, so deep he went into it. So that was the start of our struggle.

"I was 11th at the time; even if he passed me and I would be 12th and still go straight to tomorrow, he was already in tomorrow's race. He just was a little bit greedy I think. Too greedy."

Moreno then had more misfortune in his progression race as, with a lot of places to gain to make the semi-final, a promising start was blunted by an incident in front, leaving him with only the historic final to look forward to on Sunday. "You just have to take what comes," he mused.

But despite all, Moreno was glad to be back. "Fantastic! It was a great opportunity for me to be back with Micky Galter, Ralph Firman and Jonathan Lewis. So really happy about everything, great experience. It got me back into a good car that I had a lot of fun with in the past and I had a lot of fun driving it today.

"It was just a great opportunity to be in this scenario and I wanted to be part of it. Whether this will lead me to more races, I don't know – too early to say. I just love driving."

Also taking it seriously were Moreno's fellow former-winner special guests, Jan Magnussen and his newly crowned British GT champion nephew Dennis Lind, both competing in up-to-date Low Dempsey Racing Rays.

Magnussen also had fond Festival memories stoked by the fact that the very same Van Diemen RF92 in which he won the Festival was sitting across the LDR awning from him, raced this year by Moreno's nemesis, Fox.

Both Magnussen and Lind made the final after steep reacquaintances with the low-on-grip cars. And both were sufficiently bitten by the bug to want to return, albeit with more of a run-up in their machines to give themselves a better chance.

Moreno and his team had fun but were frustrated

"Loved it, absolutely loved it, it's been a hell of an experience," Magnussen told MN. "Coming from zero experience in the last 30 years almost. Big shock to the system how little grip there was. The car was quite good in the final, probably a little bit on the safe side.

"I should have had a better semi-final to be able to fight in the final, starting 24th is not a good place to be. [But] I was in the final – that was the goal. I had some good battles.

"We're already talking about how we can do it again next year. We need [more days in the car], these guys know what they're doing, you can't just show up, doesn't work like that."

easy. This was a typical Formula Ford slipstreamer and the number of cars in the train behind him was, it seemed, ever-growing. First of them was Neil Maclennan of Kevin Mills Racing, who was majorly on his case. Maclennan dominated the 2020 National FF1600 championship but hasn't raced much this year, although he looked like he'd never been away. Plus he had retribution in mind after missing out on a Festival victory chance 12 months ago by binning the car at Paddock.

Just after half distance, Maclennan squeezed his Spectrum car up the inside of Sharp at Druids to lead. However Maclennan, with some nose damage, was struggling for straightline speed and with four laps left Sharp reclaimed first place on the inside of Surtees.

The frenzied battle did not abate, but through the lunges and parries Sharp just held on for victory in a breathless finish, beating the pressuring Maclennan by a scant 0.077 seconds. The first 10 home were separated by just 2.3s.

Later, the mentioned top 10 became nine, as Maclennan was struck from the results as his earlier pass of Sharp was reckoned to be under a yellow flag. The stewards' decision was made in Maclennan's absence as he'd already left the circuit for a flight. Max Esterson was therefore promoted to second and Andre Castro to third to make it two Team USA Scholarship drivers on the podium.

"I've been in some dramatic races but that was by far the craziest race I've been in," Sharp said. "Obviously I made a few mistakes but we clawed it back and finished on a very high high.

"Last night we changed something [on set-up] because in testing in the dry we struggled out of Clearways, and we've come out of this race on top, so can't complain."

For B-M Racing it was a second Festival win on the bounce after Rory Smith's triumph last year. "I'm still in shock," Brickles added. "That's the best I've ever seen him [Sharp] drive. He was focused, he was on it and he won it. Awesome.

"Leading a final, you can't be more nerve wracking than that. He was just controlled. You can't fault that drive.

"We thought we had a bit to find in the dry so to win a dry final…we won the greasy final last year, we've been dominant in the wet, starting P6 in a dry final we just said let's have fun. He was super-focused, we've got a good car and we had a bit of luck."

SUPPORT RACES

The 21-race Festival programme battled early onset darkness and low autumn sunshine when it wasn't raining and blowing a near-gale, and offered three Mazda MX-5 championships still to be decided as a side attraction.

A bumper entry of the Japanese cars produced predictably hectic action over both days but spent too many laps behind the safety car. Two of the aspiring champions when they arrived at Brands were duly confirmed, but there were scary moments and plenty of tension along the way.

Samuel Smith successfully defended his Supercup title without winning a race at this final meeting. Nearest rival Jack Harding was a double winner, but with only two points separating each place in the finishing order, needed Smith to suffer more in a packed field.

Declan Lee was the other race winner, and all three encounters were severely curtailed by safety car interventions. Smith's third, fourth and fourth places were more than enough to earn the title.

The championship for Mk1 machines contained a change of fortune as Jack Brewer's small points advantage was converted to a deficit after their first race. Oliver Allwood was the man taking advantage, and the title became his after adding a fourth place to a pair of runner-up finishes.

Race winners were Brian Trott, Steve Foden and Michael Knibbs. Brewer could not recover sufficiently from a 14th place finish in race one, penalised for knocking a rival into a spin. He followed this up with hard-charging ninth and second places in the later races.

With two races rather than the three enjoyed by the others, the Clubman class championship was settled on day one of the Festival weekend. Harry Storer took the honours, like both other new champions without registering a win at this finale.

He was sixth in the wet and seventh in the dry, needing only to finish race two so that Robert Greensmith couldn't overtake his points score. Greensmith in fact finished behind Storer in both races, which were both won by Chris Dawkins, ending a limited season on a high note.

The programme was padded out by two over-long AMOC/Intermarque races, and two Aston Martins, a VW Golf, a Seat Toledo and a Lotus Elise made a far from impressive sight. Rikki Cann's Vantage V8 dominated the first encounter and Rob Fenn took over Paul Whight's Elise to lap just two other survivors in a sorry second race.

Brian Phillips

RACE WINNERS

■ **MX-5 Supercup**
Races 1 & 3: Jack Harding
Race 2: Declan Lee

■ **MX-5 Championship**
Race 1: Brian Trott
Race 2: Steve Foden
Race 3: Michael Knibbs

■ **MX-5 Clubman Championship**
Races 1 & 2: Chris Dawkins

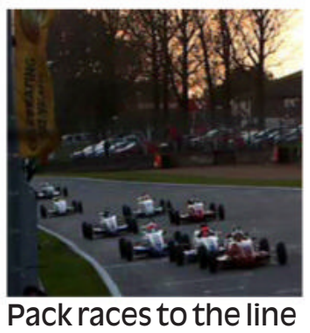
■ **AMOC GT4/Intermarque**
Race 1: Rikki Cann (Aston Martin V8 Vantage)
Race 2: Rob Fenn (Lotus Elise)

Oliver Allwood (63) snatched MX-5 championship at the last

RESULTS

Formula Ford Festival Final 2021
Laps: 20 Track: Brands Hatch

POS.	DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Jamie Sharp	Medina Sport JL17	21m42.475s
2	Max Esterson	Ray GR18	+0.138s
3	Andre Castro	Ray GR15	+0.714s
4	Jordan Dempsey	Van Diemen RF00	+0.749s
5	Chris Middlehurst	Van Diemen LA10	+1.061s
6	Ivor McCullough	Van Dieman RF00	+1.454s
7	Joey Foster	Firman 2021	+2.140s
8	Jonathan Browne	Ray GR18	+2.187s
9	Dennis Lind	Ray GR19	+2.353s
10	David McCullough	Van Diemen RF00	+7.926s


Pack races to the line

11 Jan Magnussen (Ray GR14) +11.817s; 12 Morgan Quinn (Van Diemen RF99) +13.338s; 13 Luke Cooper (Swift SC20) +13.379s; 14 Samuel Harrison (Ray GR07) +13.756s; 15 Alan Davidson (Mondiale 1989) +14.288s; 16 Abdul Ahmed (Firman RFR) +14.765s; 17 Derek Palmer (Ray GR15) +16.431s; 18 Matt Rivett (Van Diemen RF91) +16.675s; 19 Logan Hannah (Ray GR21) +18.549s; 20 Ian Gough (Van Diemen) JL13 +25.648s; R Jeremy Fairbairn (Van Diemen RF00) 19 Laps; R Jack Wolfenden (Firman RFR17) 13 Laps; R Michael Moyers (Spectrum 011C) 10 Laps; R Robert Barrable (Van Diemen RF08) 9 Laps; R Matt Cowley (Van Diemen JL15) 9 Laps; R Oli White (Medina Sport JL17) 3 Laps; R Niall Murray (Van Diemen BD21) 3 Laps; R Thomas Mills (Spectrum KMR); R Darwin Smith (Van Diemen RF90) 2 Laps; DSQ Neil Maclennan (Spectrum KMR). **Class winners:** Davidson; Rivett. **Pole position:** Foster. **Fastest Lap:** Middlehurst 50.787s (85.62 mph). **Winner's average speed:** 66.77mph.

"It still fits...": Magnussen tries out his '92 winner as nephew looks on

Rivett accepts the Brian Jones Memorial Trophy from Jones' family

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BRC REPORT: CAMBRIAN RALLY

IN BRIEF

Yates is missing

For the second BRC event in a row, Rhys Yates was absent having pulled his entry on the week of the rally. Posting on social media, the M-Sport driver explained that he had "other commitments". He added: "Gutted not to be there fighting for the British Rally Championship title." Yates had held a mathematical shot of claiming the crown but is now out of the running.

National traders

Elliot Payne arrived in Wales with an upgraded Ford Fiesta Rally2 instead of R5 but decided not to compete for BRC points. James Wilson however, who has driven a Hyundai i20 R5 in full FIA spec throughout the season so far, ran a 34mm restrictor as opposed to 32mm and therefore moved from BRC1 and into the National category. He was rewarded with a fourth-place finish.

It's no jokers

Matt Edwards, Ollie Mellors, Garry Pearson, Stephen Petch and Finlay Retson all opted to play their joker on the Cambrian – but it only worked out for one driver. Edwards failed to win – costly, as title rival Osian Pryce got five points for playing his joker on Mull – Mellors and Retson both retired and Petch missed out on victory, too. Pearson, however, played it to perfection; the extra five points enough for him to win the National title one round early.

Woe for Retson

The Cambrian is an event Finlay Retson likes but the 2021 event really tested his patience. It started pre-event as he returned from recce to discover the team performing a last-minute turbo change on his Ford Fiesta Rally4. That thankfully got sorted and he took the start, but Retson's event was over after the first stage as he lost third and fourth gear. He had led after SS1.

Kelly's full circle

David Kelly contested his final Junior BRC event at the same place as his first, hiring a Ford Fiesta Rally4 from EDSL Sport as he had sold his own example. That's because Kelly has already completed two events in a Fiesta R5 and is weighing up an Irish Tarmac assault in 2022 alongside select gravel outings. "The pace is savage, we're here for some more craic," he said. He retired on SS1.

A lone wolf

Having already secured the BRC Academy title on Mull and with 2021 class rival Fraser Anderson not starting the Cambrian, Johnnie Mulholland admitted he was purely "out for seat time" in his Ford Fiesta R2T. However the attrition around him allowed to scoop second place in the JBRC despite his ageing car

Trouble for the Kiwi

Emma Gilmour made her BRC debut in a Ford Fiesta Rally2 but was on the back foot, missing the recce. Staying with co-driver Claire Mole in Scotland with travel restrictions prohibiting her from travelling home, Gilmour had a "big learning curve" on her Rally2 debut but "absolutely loved it."

PRYCE IN CONTROL TO ZERO IN ON TITLE

Pryce was able to measure his pace towards the end

Another bruising event for Matt Edwards played straight into Osian Pryce's hands as he beat his team-mate in his own back yard. By Luke Barry

There was a real sense of deja vu on the Cambrian Rally as Osian Pryce won a round of the British Rally Championship and Matt Edwards faltered. But this time the stakes were higher as Pryce's victory on Edwards' home turf moved him close to a maiden British title.

On Halloween weekend, it wasn't the thought of creepy goblins that were keeping the British Rally Championship crews awake, but the fear of drenched rally stages. Matthew Wilson – who remained an outside bet for the title ahead of the Cambrian – was the first to get a fright on the opening Gwydir stage as he retired. "We just got sucked in by a puddle on the inside and damaged the radiator on some rocks," explained co-driver Elliott Edmondson afterwards. "It was nothing at all, really."

Keith Cronin was in the wars, too. "The first mile felt good and then we turned into one right hander and nothing happened,

The dragon roared loudly in Wales

A spill left Matt Edwards with damaged steering and problems with the brakes on his Volkswagen Polo

and we turned into a bank," he remarked, branches hanging out of various grilles on his Ford Fiesta Rally2. It got worse on the next test as Cronin punctured "400 metres" into the stage and "had to drive a while to find a safe place to change it," losing over five minutes.

Cronin was back on the pace on SS3 but it had been another difficult morning indicative of a season where's he had no fortune at all. "No," he agreed, "but you get seasons like that. We were on a development tyre which we didn't get the chance to test so we'll try another one this afternoon, it's just about getting our confidence."

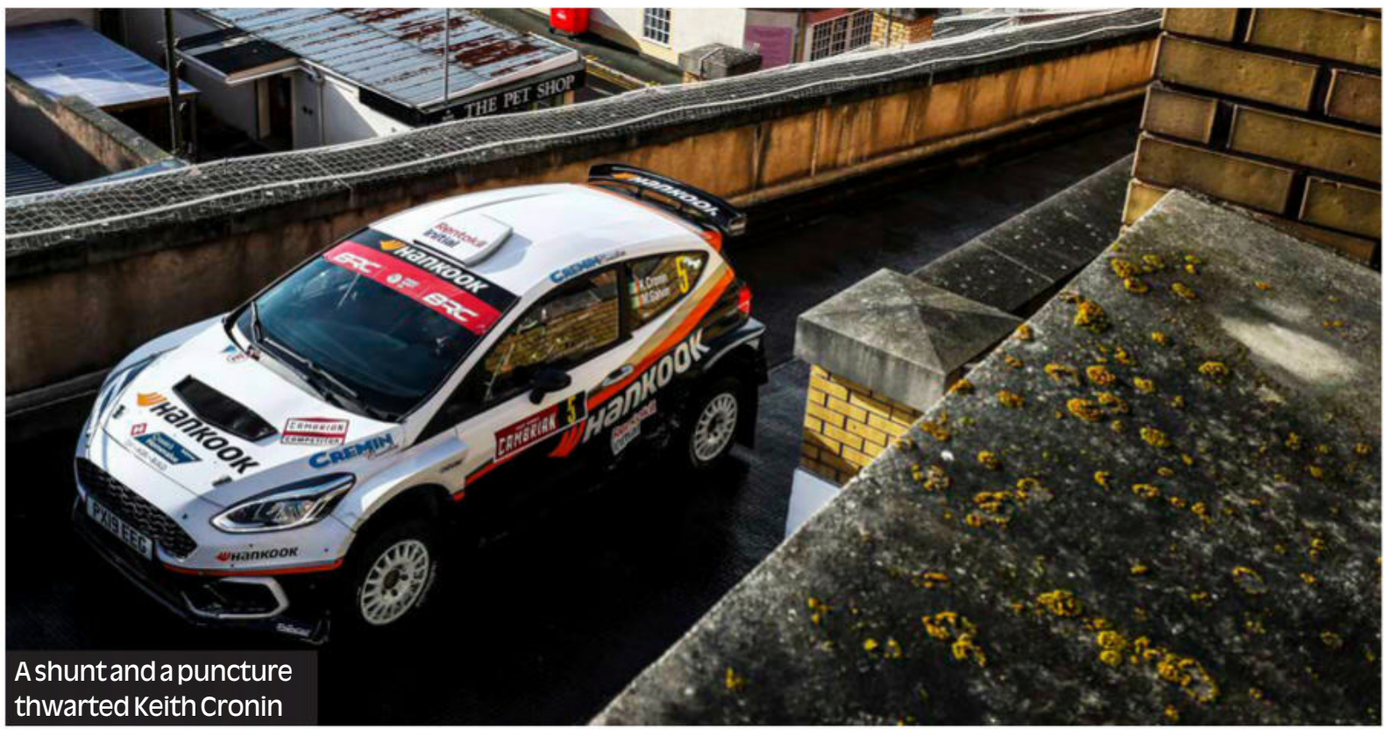
At least Cronin survived the morning – Ollie Mellors didn't, picking up a double puncture on his Proton Iriz R5. BRC returnee James Williams was also in strife, spinning on SS1, collecting a front-left puncture (and a whopping four-minute time loss on Penmachno) before a bulge manifested on his rear-left tyre on Alwyn. But this was all a bit of a sideshow to yet another ding-dong battle between Melvyn Evans Motorsport team-mates Pryce and Edwards.

Cambrian is Edwards' country – he grew up here and has won the rally for the last two years – but it was Pryce's Volkswagen Polo GTI R5 that led after Gwydir by a clear 10.4s. "I had no grip, no confidence," reflected Edwards at regroup. "About half a mile in, we had a little slide at the back that I wasn't expecting, then another few corners in there was a slide at the front that I wasn't expecting and lots of surprises which really wasn't nice."

Pryce found it equally "hairy, in places [it was] like flipping heck, we're in the ditch again! We didn't expect it to be that slimy." But he was once again quicker on SS2, 0.6s up on Edwards, before Edwards pulled 4.4s back to lurk 6.8s behind with the repeat pass and the brand-new, asphalt Twin Lakes stage to go.

"I'm not on the doorhandles, I don't

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



A shunt and a puncture thwarted Keith Cronin

Tyre trouble meant that Ollie Mellors' rally was over very quickly

CREIGHTON SURVIVES CHAOS

William Crieghton was in charge as other junior runners faltered

William Creighton's irresistible Junior BRC form continued as he strengthened his championship hand on an event where most of the contenders failed to finish.

First to fall were Finlay Retson – who won the first stage, but gearbox woes forced him out straight after it – and David Kelly who lost brakes in his similar Fiesta Rally4. Kyle White inherited the lead from Reston in his Peugeot 208 R2 but "crawled to the end" of SS2 as the engine problem that undid his Trackrod Rally Yorkshire bid also ruined White's Cambrian. He too was out.

Creighton had shipped over 30s on SS1 as his Fiesta cut out and lured him into a ditch, but the car "seemed to behave afterwards". He put the pedal to the metal and dominated SS2 and SS3 to head Eamonn Kelly by 1.4 seconds at service.

"I just need to get my finger out a bit!" Kelly admitted. "I've never really driven on gravel that's so slippy so it's all good learning. We're going to try and push on and see if we can get a bit closer to William's times. We're here this weekend just to get faster, that's our main plan."

Kelly's mission was thwarted though as his Fiesta Rally4 expired on SS5. Creighton's shoulders were therefore free of pressure and his Fiesta was almost alone in making it to the end; Jason Dickson and Eddie Kelly falling by the wayside on the second loop too.

In the end, Creighton beat Johnnie Mulholland's older Ford by well over four minutes: "I'm just happy to get maximum points today," Creighton said at the finish back in Llandudno. "Everybody's working hard so it's nice to get a good result."

think, you could go quicker but you could be a lot more ragged and throw time away as well so it's just finding the balance," said Pryce. "We've got it all to do still, it's just started quite well to be fair."

Edwards was glued to his phone before MN interrupted him. "That was a surprise given it didn't feel any nicer," he said of his stage win. "We were in bits of Alwen I've never been before!" And SS7 Twin Lakes, could that prove decisive? "Yeah I've been watching the in-car for that just now…"

But – not for the first time this season – Edwards wouldn't get the chance to make use of his rigorous preparation. A "completely unexpected" bump on the second pass of Gwydir caught him out, sent his Polo R5 into a bank and broke the track control arm on the front-right, leaving Edwards with "very little brakes" and "very little steering". Just like they had in Mull, ratchet straps came to Edwards' rescue as he once again demonstrated his superb mechanical skills and never-say-die attitude to get his Polo to the end of the rally.

However the impact on the timesheets was obvious. Edwards dropped a shave over four minutes (1m40s in road penalties) and as he continually battled to keep his car moving, it looked for a moment that Pryce might seal the title in north Wales. But Edwards salvaged third to keep himself in the hunt – just.

"It wasn't very nice, it wasn't very pretty, but it got here," he said. "It's not dead," he added on his title aspirations, "which we thought it probably was after stage four and at several points after, so brilliant to be here."

Pryce backed off when he knew Edwards was in trouble but this wasn't a victory he inherited. Pryce led the reigning champion from the off and was there to cash-in when his team-mate floundered. "Perfect, absolutely perfect," said the winner. "I'm happy with that performance, we've gone up a gear this weekend. The pace has always been there but we just haven't been able to unlock it so big thanks to the team, they've worked really hard to give me the best car possible."

Survival however was key, and Seb Perez did just that to claim a breakthrough second-place finish, sealed with a second-fastest time on Twin Lakes. "It was just a clean run, not too bad at all," he said.

Williams had a much stronger afternoon than his morning and soared up to fourth place on his first rally since the same event last February. Second quickest on SS4, SS5 and SS6, the Welshman finished just 18.7s shy of the podium.

Emma Gilmour sealed a top five, nearly a minute clear of Junior winner William Creighton while Cronin did change compound but continued to battle with a lack of grip, finishing down in seventh as the last classified BRC1 competitor. "I can't commit, it would be dangerous," he commented after SS6. The silver lining however was Cronin's first BRC stage win since 2017 on the final stage held on asphalt.

RESULTS

Cambrian Rally British Rally Championship
Round 6/7 When: October 30 Where: Llandudno, Conwy

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Osian Pryce/Noel O'Sullivan	Volkswagen Polo GTI R5	45m23.4s
2	Seb Perez/Gary McElihinney	Ford Fiesta Rally2	+2m18.9s
3	Matt Edwards/Darren Garrod	Volkswagen Polo GTI R5	+4m08.6s
4	James Williams/Dai Roberts	Ford Fiesta Rally2	+4m27.3s
5	Emma Gilmour/Claire Mole	Ford Fiesta Rally2	+5m08.5s
6	William Creighton/Liam Regan	Ford Fiesta Rally4	+6m04.8s
7	Keith Cronin/Mikie Galvin	Ford Fiesta Rally2	+6m56.8s
8	Brendan Cumiskey/Lorcan Moore	Ford Fiesta Rally4	+8m50.8s
9	Johnnie Mulholland/Calum Maguire	Ford Fiesta R2T	+10m31.8s
10	Joseph Kelly/Shane Byrne	Ford Fiesta R2T	+12m07.8s

Class winners: BRC1: Pryce; **Junior BRC:** Creighton **National Rally Title:** Garry Pearson (Skoda Fabia R5) **BRC Academy:** Mulholland. **BRC standings (after 6/7 rounds):** 1 Pryce 121; 2 Edwards 98; 3 Matthew Wilson 53; 4 Rhys Yates 53; 5 Sam Moffett 37; 6 Perez 36; 7 Cronin 32; 8 Creighton 29; 9 Josh Moffett 24; 10 Tom Cave 18

ANOTHER TITLE FOR PEARSON

Garry Pearson secured his second title in as many weekends, winning the British National Rally Title in a winner-takes-all battle with Stephen Petch.

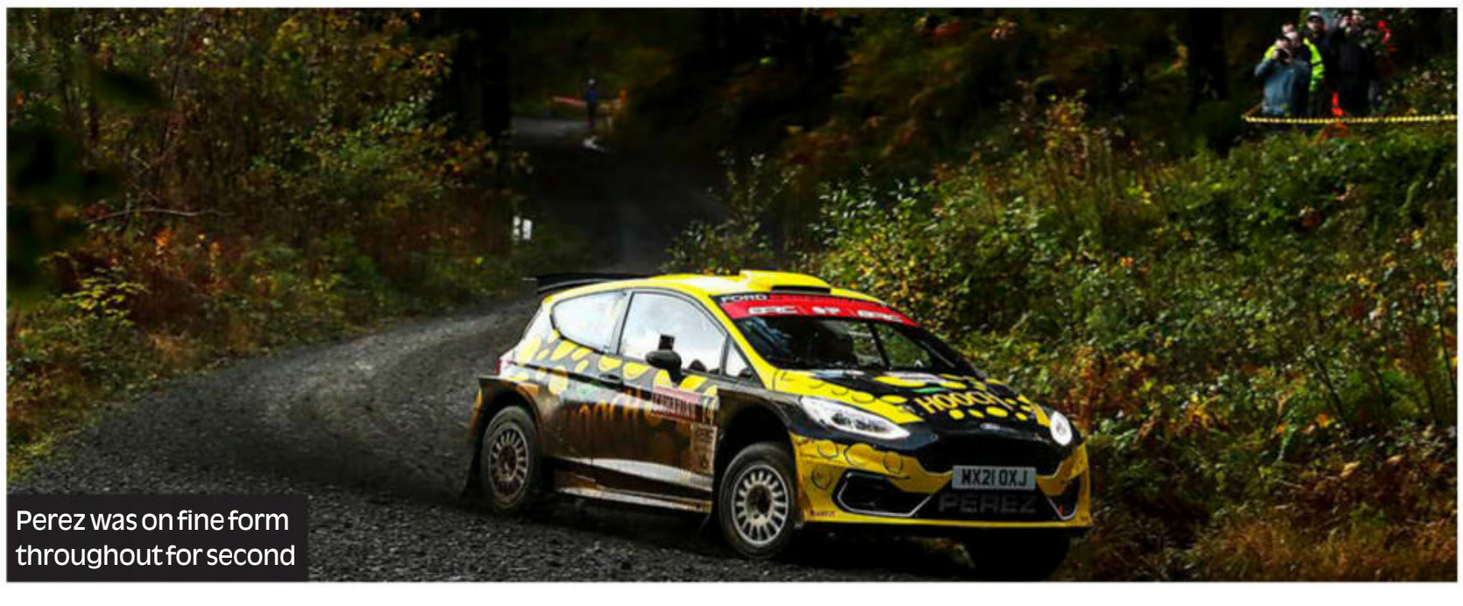
Both Pearson (Skoda Fabia R5) and Petch (Ford Fiesta WRC) elected to play their points-boosting joker, meaning that if either of them won the title would be settled.

Sadly, an epic battle to the finish never materialised, mainly because Petch suffered on overshoot in the disgusting conditions. That meant he trailed Pearson by 45.8 seconds after just two stages. Pearson for his part was driving impressively though, setting top-three overall times on six of the seven stages and going outright quickest on Penmachno 2.

Ironically, the steering started "playing up" just after that and Pearson "drove like a pansy" thereafter but he was still good for a 1m30.2s victory. "This is probably my biggest accolade so far," Pearson said. "Hopefully in two weeks' time we can maybe snatch another couple [of championships, BTRDA and Welsh]."

James Wilson overhauled Petch on the final test by just 2.7s, but later got a minute penalty, dropping him to third.

More silverware for Pearson



Perez was on fine form throughout for second

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FEATURE

LOUISE AITKEN-WALKER

FIRST AMONG EQUALS: A RALLY DRIVER'S LIFE

Britain's first World title-winning rally driver answers the Motorsport News readers' questions, as put to her by Nick Garton

Success at Sanremo in 1990

If you were to pick the biggest stars of British rallying who went on to win honours on the World championship stages, names like Roger Clark, Malcolm Wilson or Tony Pond would be high on the list. So too would the great co-drivers, including Fred Gallagher, David Richards or Nicky Grist – never forgetting our late drivers' champions, Richard Burns and Colin McRae.

But high amid this firmament of our 'best of the best' in the WRC, Louise Aitken-Walker MBE stands tall as the first British driver to claim a title from the world's top rally series, for which she also joined the elite pantheon of RAC Segrave Trophy recipients.

Aitken-Walker's bid to claim the 1990 WRC Ladies' Cup was ultimately successful despite it almost taking her life and that of co-driver Tina Thorner in a terrifying accident on Rally Portugal. Her career was characterised by a drive and desire to succeed that was evident from first taking part in a Ford-funded series for women more than a decade earlier.

Having retired from full-time competition in 1993 to focus on her family and the successful car dealership that she and husband Graham have maintained in her hometown of Duns to this day, Aitken-Walker took time out from work and her beloved horses to tackle the posers put to her by MN's readership:

Question: What is it about the Borders that makes motorsport such a part of life, and why do you think so much talent has come from there?
Ed McFarlane
Via Twitter

LA-W: "That's a very good question. I think in the old days it was based on farmers. Farmers had the opportunity to take their kids out and, you know, they had to work on the farm. I learnt as well to drive a Land Rover when I was 10. I remember being put in the seat of this Land Rover with a massive steering wheel for me then, and my father would put a turnip on the accelerator to say what speed he would want to go, and I would steer while he would be out the back of the Land Rover throwing the turnips out to the cattle or whatever. So you would get to know cars before you were legal to drive on the road. Competition [driving] is like the national sport up here.

"Duns has got a population of 3000 people and probably a third or half of them are involved – competitors, marshals, officials, spectators – we're all very enthusiastic about motorsport up here. Of course, we've had Jim

Photos: Motorsport Images, mcklein-imagedatabase.com, Graham Walker

Aitken-Walker's older brothers spotted talent

Clark, Andrew Cowan and lots of amazing drivers. The motor clubs are very strong up here. They encourage youngsters, but as for the driving skills, we have some of the best driving roads around and we're lucky that we don't have much population. The are great, and we have motor clubs that encourage all the young up-and-coming drivers and I think it's a great thing.

"I'm actually president now of the Berwick & District Motor Club and we instil into the youngsters that the opportunities are there to go to an airfield or a field even and get a feel for the car. The majority of youngsters nowadays are very sensible on the road, and they let all their gremlins out on private land – we have the odd noisy or colourful car, but that's just kids enjoying their cars. Some of them put red mud flaps on to make them look like rally cars, but their behaviour on the road is generally very good. It's just the way everybody is: they enjoy their cars and the sport. They want to look cool."

Question: What was it that inspired your brothers to enter you in the 'Find a Lady Rally Driver' search. What was your reaction to them doing it?
Maureen Walsh
Via Facebook
LA-W: "One of them especially, the younger one, Jim, he had more to do with it all. He wanted in any way possible to get involved in motorsport and he thought that it would be a good idea and he did think that I had potential. It's one of these things with a competition there's always a negative way of looking at it and saying 'oh you'll never get in' but on this occasion it was done and dusted and the first invitation to drive for Ford Motor Company came through the door before I could even take a breath! So with me being a competitive person I took the bull by the horns and went out there to try and do my best.

"The competition was really fierce and I was chosen to drive, but Ford Motor Company didn't really want to put all the money into one single youngster because maybe they thought I was a bit vulnerable or didn't know what I might do; I might want to throw the towel in or whatever. So they decided to make a massive championship as a publicity stunt and there were 15 ladies to do races and rallies. Now, I was fine on the rally side, but I wasn't so good on the race side and I actually didn't win that championship. But my potential as a rally driver was greater than any other so that's why they ran me later on that following year."

Question: Do you feel more like a Ford driver or a Vauxhall driver and which cars did you have enjoy the most?
Darren Robinson
Via Facebook
LA-W: "I am neither – I'm a professional driver! It's very difficult because you've got to be diplomatic. The Ford cars were all new to me, motorsport was new and the rear-wheel-drive Escorts were absolutely fabulous. Then you had to adapt to front-wheel drive with Vauxhall and Peugeot – we got seven class wins out of seven [in 1987-'88] with the Peugeot 205. Nobody could beat us in that GTI, so

continued on page 22

Rising star's early rivals included Malcolm Wilson (left) and future husband Graham Walker (right)

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FEATURE

Aitken-Walker drove RED's unique Sierra 4T in 1984

every team has a special memory. There were some drawbacks, some difficult cars, but you just had to bluff your way to convince yourself that it was an easy rally. These days doing events I often drive a Ford because Escorts are so popular and there are lots of them about. There's very few Astras about anymore to be able to drive them – what I will say is that this weekend [at the Lombard Rally Bath], the Escort I had was fitted with power steering, which made it a very nice car to drive… I'm not as fit as I used to be!"

Question: Were you competing with or against Graham when you first met?
Barbara Rendle
Via Twitter
LA-W: "I did race against Graham, and he did beat me, but he really was just another competitor then, he wasn't really a boyfriend. When we started to go out, I was rallying and he was working hard so he kind of stopped motorsport as I was starting so we never really crossed paths. There were just two occasions and he beat me on one occasion, big style, and then he crashed on the other rally so I beat him effectively.

"But we always said we'd never work in the same team and keep our distance because it's a professional job and I was very hungry to get some titles under my belt, so we had to fit in a lifestyle. There was one occasion with the Peugeot 205 that he was on the same team, in 1987 I think, and that's the year we won every class outing so he was a very good mechanic but it was quite funny to work alongside him. We were very professional about it and we had a great result and a good time. But he was also a very, very quick driver."

Question: Some of the conversations that I remember in the service park were a bit near the knuckle, it was all the boys together. I don't imagine that you put up with things like that: did you ever have to pull someone up?
Allan Richardson
Via email
LA-W: "There was one occasion, I think it was on the Dukeries Rally, it was a very unfortunate problem for myself. It was on an airfield, and it was a very narrow concrete track and if I'd gone off onto the ploughed field, I would have still been there today but there was a Ford Escort that got right up behind me, and it was impossible [to let him past]. It's about 200 yards we're talking about, I probably held him up for four seconds, but at the end of the event I was quite alarmed because I thought he was going to punch my lights out. He was furious and pretty aggressive and quite scary so I did get an eye opener on that one, but thankfully my mechanics and everyone calmed him down and got it sorted out.

"I can't remember who it was, but I'm pretty sure whoever it was will remember and they'll be embarrassed about it now. To compete against the men, you have to be pretty serious about it. There was a lot of 'oh, a woman driver this…a woman driver that' in the media and so on but there's much more of a feeling of equals now. You still get the odd man that will go out to beat you, but it's just inbred in some people, they just can't help themselves. I would be the same, I don't want to be beaten by anybody, but I wouldn't be so aggressive. People are less aggressive now, it's more tongue-in-cheek."

Question: Was there ever a point where you felt that you were losing momentum in your results or that you needed to find something extra to get as far in the sport as you did and if so how did you get past it?
Albert Hall
Via email
LA-W: "There certainly was, around 1984 everything was going along fine, we were getting some good results, but all of a sudden nothing came along and I thought 'oh dear…'. So we drove the Nissan for Frances Mary Blydenstein, and that was a pretty hard car to drive. It wasn't very forgiving at all, and I really struggled to get good results.

"I had a lot of accidents in that Nissan and at the end of that year I thought: 'oh, I am struggling, I've got to keep at it', and thankfully Peugeot came up with a drive and we started to turn the corner again and climb up the ladder. That was great but, yes, there was a big lull when things didn't go right and you've just got to keep at it, you know?"

Question: You had such a long partnership with Ellen Morgan, how did it begin and how important was that relationship – and what prompted the switch to Tina Thorner in 1990?
John Ross
Via Facebook
LA-W: "It was absolutely one of the most important things in my career I would say, because Ellen also did that first championship with Ford, but she sat with a lady called Mary Fullerton. Ellen was an extremely clever lady, and at the end of that year, she said to me 'if ever you need an experienced co-driver, please give me a shout'.

"So, Ford Motor Company brought us together and it was a partnership that was never really broken for years, and Ellen taught me a lot, she guided me not just through rallies but was like a second mother to me. She was high up in her work and travelling a lot when the opportunity to do the World championship came up, which obviously I couldn't turn

"I'm more of a marathon driver… I could stay out there forever"

Louise Aitken-Walker

New era: campaigning the front-drive Ford Escort RS1600i in 1983

Blydenstein Nissan was a tough nut to crack in '86

down, and she couldn't do it.

"Unfortunately, there was a bit of a… not a fall-out, but a parting of the ways. We missed each other for a couple of years but everything was alright after a while, Ellen went and did many rallies in Ireland, but it was a little bit empty in my life then. But we got back being friendly and everything was hunky-dory and then sadly she died but she was a great enthusiast towards my sport. She was so encouraging."

Question: What lay behind the decision for you to compete in the British Touring Car Championship and how confident were you about making the switch?
Bill Harrison
Via Facebook
LA-W: "I wasn't confident at all because I had John Cleland breathing down my neck as my team-mate and John's only just 20 miles down the road here. John and I had known each other for a while and he was very hungry to win this title. And then Vauxhall decided to put me into the rally car, not the full-blown race car at first, just to see if I would adapt to the racing and they wanted me to have experience so that the following year I could go out and do some Tarmac events on the World Rally Championship.

"It was a very clever move on their part, and I did struggle a lot with the old [rally] Astra because you were completely on the other side of the car, you're going around clockwise in a left-hand-drive ex-works rally car, really.

"But give anybody a chance [to prove themselves] and my times got better and better. Eventually, they decided to put me in a proper racing car and by the time Silverstone came round I had a fastest lap and I was actually beating John – ha! And his father was shouting down the radio: 'you have to slow down, we need John to have [the points for] this fastest lap!' And I just loved it: I just got the thing between my teeth and went for it and we finished fourth overall in the championship. John won the championship as well, so it was excellent for Vauxhall.

"John wasn't very happy when I was in danger of getting fastest lap but, to be fair to him, John was very kind and took me out and showed me the lines. We probably did four or five days of practice, just with him helping me like that, showing me braking points and things like that, and I say: 'I bet you wish you never did that, John!' We laugh about it now!"

Question: What were the best and the worst things about being a BTCC driver compared to being a rally driver and did you ever anticipate that your achievements would still be talked about in what was ultimately your rookie season?
Mike Anderson
Via email
LA-W: "The worst was actually having people around you on the track making mistakes. That was what I couldn't cope with very well. I was quite nervous to go into the corner first without knowing where to put the car on the track. So, with my inexperience, and theirs, yeah, I had a few bumps.

"When you're out in the forest, you're on your own and nobody can touch you. But it was quite funny because we didn't have a horrendous accident in the touring cars, it was quick stuff, but having the experience to go out and do some different motorsport was great. We did the British Grand Prix weekend with all those people watching; things like that were probably the best side.

"A bit of contact was the way it went, they knew who I was and, also, they were after John, so it was pretty hectic for us all. They didn't do us any favours, anyway! There were a few bumps and scrapes, but I didn't give up."

Question: Was there ever an option to stay in the BTCC or to go back to it?
Matt James
Motorsport News
LA-W: "No, I didn't want that. It wasn't me. I was far more comfortable in a rally car and I tried to do Formula 3 early when Cellnet, the phone company, was sponsoring people like Martin Donnelly and Damon Hill. They tried to put me in a car, but it wasn't for me. I'm more a kind of a marathon driver, you know, long distance. I could stay out there forever, and racing is really like a sprint, and I was never the sort of to get out of the blocks early!"

MN sets the scene: After using the BTCC to gain asphalt knowledge while also contesting the British Rally

continued on page 24

Finnish ace Mikael Sundstrom taught Aitken-Walker his techniques

Sundstrom's Brands charge left crowd – and Aitken-Walker – amazed

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FEATURE

Aitken-Walker (left) was in the thick of BTCC action beside John Cleland

The challenge of long events and challenges made rallying first love

Barbara Armstrong (l), Aitken-Walker and Vicki Butler-Henderson

Championship with Vauxhall in 1989, Aitken-Walker entered the 1990 World Rally Championship in full, with the aim of winning the Ladies' Cup. After a bright start finishing 11th overall on the Monte, she and co-driver Tina Thorner crashed out on the second event in Portugal down an embankment, landing inverted in a lake and rapidly sinking to the bottom. Miraculously, both women were able to unstrap themselves, escape the car and swim back to the surface. Aitken-Walker has since said that, echoing Romain Grosjean's escape from the Bahrain GP fireball last year, she momentarily resigned herself to her fate, and that being so relaxed was what gave her the clarity needed to get out.

Question: Aside from the big accident, what were the highlights of your World championship campaign and what was Tina Thorner like to work with?
Roger Banks
Via email
LA-W: "Tina is a very capable and strong-willed person, you know, she's a brilliant co-driver and I was quite nervous because I'd never been with anyone else before. So not only was she a top co-driver in the European scene, she was also foreign!

"I thought language might be a bit of a barrier, but I mean she speaks brilliant English, brilliant German and we got on like a house on fire. She's a very calming influence but she does get the best out of us drivers.

"Among the highlights, I was on TV a lot, there was Blue Peter, I was on A Question of Sport a couple of times, we were busy. We were out of the country for nine months of the year as well and it really made us a household name, particularly so after the accident. That turned the whole [season] completely bizarre because, you know, it was such a horrendous accident that we survived, and from there we went on to win the championship.

"I think that accident was a one-off. I don't know, it didn't feel right on that rally. It was unsettling [from the start]. And when it happened, I thought: well that's it: we're over and done with. These things don't happen that often. To actually have an accident as big as that, and for us both to get out, just everybody was rooting for us [afterwards]. The whole crowd was behind us at each event and it was just amazing because I think it just shows how tough we were. It was good for the whole 'lady driver' aspect there, but it was pretty tough.

"But there was no way I was going to walk away from that because the championship was just too much of a dangly carrot and I just wanted that championship so much.

"On the following rallies we went over a couple of days before to do a little bit more recce because you could go out then as long as you wanted. We did a few days' extra recce and we were lying sixth overall on the Corsica rally which was absolutely going to be great but the cam wheel pulley broke two miles from the end and I thought: 'I absolutely cannot believe this'. We had a DNF. And that, after the massive accident in Portugal, and you want this championship so much it feels like every door is shutting in your face.

"Anyway, after Corsica we went on to Australia and did a great job out there, we did a great job in New Zealand and Sanremo so we actually nearly got the championship sewn up in Sanremo. Then we had to come over and do the RAC and at the finish of the RAC I've never had such a big smile on my face… ever! It was not too bad [nerves and pressure], on the RAC, but then I was not in a position like Elfyn [Evans, competing for this year's WRC title]. Elfyn has to win and I only really only had to finish 20th – and if my opponents didn't finish I'd be fine anyway. But this year and last year Elfyn's had it all to do on the final round, which is a bit different.

"It's like in 1987 in the Peugeot on the RAC we were lying sixth overall and that was amazing for a 1600cc Peugeot 205 in a WRC event. We had two or three stages to go, and Markku Alen had gone off before us, and he must have hit some logs and he just threw all these logs across the road with his car and we came round and one just pierced the oil cooler and we did not finish again."

Question: Who was the team-mate that helped you the most? Did you have any team-mates who were less helpful because you were a woman?
Pam Coupland
Via email
LA-W: "There was one who really took

"Mikael Sundstrom was the most fantastic team-mate"

Louise Aitken-Walker

Losing sixth overall in Corsica to engine failure was tough in '90

me under his wing, who said to me: 'if you're going to be my team-mate, I am going to teach you how to drive properly, like a Finn!' and who took me out for half a day of tuition in Kielder to show me how to be the best I could and who was always there with an answer for every question. And that was Mikael Sundstrom, who is unfortunately no longer with us. He was the most enthusiastic person, team-mate, I've ever had. He was just marvellous.

"Dave Metcalfe was another great team-mate as well, we had a lot of fun, we both had a job to do but we egged each other on and it was great: he had not a bad bone in him and was a great team-mate. The results he got in the giant-killing Nova were unbelievable, very like Mikael as well. You know, I once went to see [Sundstrom] at Brands Hatch because Peugeot had him in production racing – not the British Touring Cars, a step down – in a car |that was probably only just inside the top-20 [on pace]. But it was pouring down and he ended up in second overall."

Question: Both your daughter and your niece have competed in the sport in recent years – did that surprise you and how do you feel about being a role model to young women in rallying?
Francesca Taylor
Via email
LA-W: "It's just absolutely brilliant to see that they wanted to do some motorsport. My brother's daughter; well I knew that she would love to drive because she's just mad keen. But when my daughter wanted to drive, I mean she wasn't useless, but I was a bit apprehensive when she had her first accident and I thought: 'oh God, is this a good thing?' But she was good.

"Both her dad and I, we know what it's like, we know how exhilarating it is to drive a rally car and get results but she was good and I was pleased she had a go. It's just so expensive – she had the talent but not probably the purse to go with it.

"Like anything that you know can be positive for them, you try and instil good experiences into youngsters. You want to get them up and running and encourage them."

Question: Could you have achieved as much in your career if you were starting now?
Mark Butler
Via Twitter
LA-W: "I would like to say yes, but it's also a difficult question. [There's a brief pause as Louise considers the idea]. The cars have changed so much, but if I was still in the same mode now as I was in my 20s, with that focus and drive, as competitive a person, then yeah, I reckon I could compete and win.

"This sort of links into what I was saying in answer to the earlier questions, in that the rallies have changed a bit, they're more sprints now. I find it quite difficult to get up in the morning and drive at 110% straight off, I like to do it over a few days so that, I would say, that would be the only thing with which I would struggle: the events being so short these days."
MN: Motorsport News has been following the story of Team Excite recently, which is aiming to become the first all-British, all-female team to compete on the Dakar, and it is looking for a driver. Would that be your cup of tea?
LA-W: "Yeah, I think I should do that. I've always wanted to do the Dakar. They would have to pay me an awful lot of money, though!" ■

Tina Thorner shared the drama of 1990 World title

Officiating on the Jim Clark Rally is an ongoing passion

Segrave Trophy holder with Moss and Lewis

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Lind and Machitski won the title after early marker

BRITISH GT: WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN AND WHAT WAS

There were many 'might have beens' in a tight GT3 championship, but Dennis Lind and Leo Machitski's Barwell Lamborghini took the honours impressively as Graham Keilloh observes

Loggie and Buurman were just short of the crown in a RAM Mercedes

We all know the one about exactly what stops when the flag drops, and opening rounds are indeed good for a sense for who's hot and who's not. So it was in British GT's 2021 curtain raiser at Brands Hatch in May.

In a simplified GT3 Pro-Am (plus some Silver-Ams) contest, there were credible contenders wherever you turned. Perennial pacesetter Phil Keen was in a strong-looking new pairing with Michael Igoe in a WPI Lamborghini. Champion duo Jonny Adam and Andrew Howard had recoupled in their Beechdean Aston Martin.

Hot-shoe reigning champion Sandy Mitchell, still in a Barwell Lamborghini, stepped up to lead a Pro-Am partnership with Keen's former partner Adam Balon. And there was also the Ian Loggie and Yelmer Buurman RAM Racing Mercedes duo that looked potent the previous year, and were reigning Pro-Am champion with now no all-Silver pairings to worry about as they'd been outlawed.

Igoe/Keen indeed drew first blood with Brands victory, ahead of Howard/Adam. But it was the occupants of the bottom step of the podium that had really laid down a marker. And they were not among the usual suspects listed.

It was Leo Machitski and Dennis Lind in the other Barwell Lamborghini, with Lind in the second half of the race after a pitstop delay tearing chunks from the gaps to the cars ahead, making a thrilling three-wide pass of Buurman and almost reaching Adam for second. It was pace that in time took the Lambo pair all the way to the title, Barwell's second on the bounce.

"All we have to do is look back at race one," Machitski tells Motorsport News, basking in his title won months later, "and you remember his [Lind's] drive to catch up 20-something seconds considering we lost 14 seconds in the pits for no reason, just because the timer broke."

Lind agrees the Brands performance was key. "That was the moment where I thought OK it's game on and switch on and [we] kept the same attitude in the car ever since then," Lind says to MN. "We've done a very very good race balance for the car and made it work really well over a distance of a race."

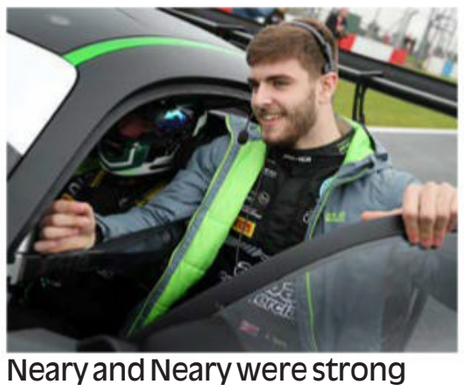
There was a consensus among the protagonists that, in this ultra-competitive title contest, small things made a big difference. Underlining the point all five efforts mentioned entered the Donington Park finale with an overall title chance; all rued too at least one dose of misfortune during the season without which the title could have been theirs, or at least closer.

But for the most part Machitski/Lind was the pairing to beat, particularly after dominating at Spa where Machitski is a specialist. Only once did they fail to finish in the top five, and that was on the first visit to Donington Park, when Machitski collided with the spun Igoe at Turn 1.

"It's been consistency, consistency, consistency and that's how you win championships," Machitski asserts. And Lind again concurs. "We had one DNF and that's really what counts for us. We've always had great pace in the car but we've not went for the opportunistic moves and that's probably what saved us in the end."

Yet, as our opening anecdote indicates, this was no cruise-and-collect. Lind indeed bagged fastest lap in six out of the seven meetings, an accumulation that Machitski said he specifically "motivated" with his driving partner. For Lind too the title was personal vindication, after last year splitting with WPI and being dropped as a Lamborghini factory driver, and experiencing ill health the year before.

"Dennis is obviously crazy quick," Machitski adds. "In general he's really really matured and he's an incredibly talented driver and in fact one of the most talented drivers I've ever seen and been lucky to be paired with. He's done an incredible job every time it's counted."



Neary and Neary were strong

> ***"Dennis is crazy quick; he's really matured"***
>
> **Leo Machitski**

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

Lind/Machitski's Barwell Lambo was hard to miss

Igoe/Keen won Brands Hatch's season opener

Just like last year, it was a RAM Mercedes that narrowly missed out to Barwell for the overall title. This time it was Loggie and Buurman coming just short, and all that denied them was Marcus Clutton and Morgan Tillbrook's Enduro McLaren refusing to be dislodged from the lead in a tense Donington finale.

And the RAM pair couldn't point at much they'd done wrong to miss out. "I look at the overall season, as a driver and team I don't think we put a step wrong," Loggie reflects. "We were just unlucky at Snetterton with the puncture and unlucky to be to be hit at Spa so that's cost us big. But look at the rest of the teams etc they've been in the gravel, they've spun, they've been off and we've done everything right and had good pace. So I think it's one of these things. Come back next season and maybe the luck will come our way, so I think I'll be back for more."

Third-placed Mitchell and Balon's cause for regret laid in the Brands season opener mentioned, as Balon was nudged into the gravel early on by James Cottingham's RAM Mercedes, leaving Mitchell/Balon with a deficit they carried for the rest of the campaign.

Mitchell tells MN: "That cost us a bit at the start of the year and it wasn't really our fault so if you take that out of it then it's been a really strong year and we've been very consistent and always in that top four or five cars which has been the main thing and we've taken chances when they've been there and been on the podium. Adam's enjoyed it and has taken a good step forward with his driving this year and I'm happy as a whole.

"[Being the Pro driver] makes qualifying pretty intense, because all the Pro drivers are on the same track at the same time and really pushing for it. So some qualifying sessions have been fantastic and we've been right at the front and then some others you're just missing two or three tenths and then all of a sudden you're in P5."

Keen, despite the opening-round victory mentioned, once again missed out on British GT's title, and his WPI effort – the year's only multiple overall race winner – had more causes for regret than most.

First it followed up its Brands win with a mystery lack of pace at Silverstone, then got nothing at Donington due to the first corner prang mentioned, and later it had an engine issue. Igoe also got what looked a harsh penalty at Snetterton, was nudged off at Oulton Park by Loggie and spun out of the lead in the wet Donington finale.

Still, the WPI pair ended the year on the upturn and Keen is optimistic for 2022. "The team have worked really hard all year and I think everything is starting to pay off and come together now," he tells MN. "We always said it was going to be a two-year project and Michael has been getting better and better.

"[He's been] improving his driving and his technique in the way he brakes, that's been the biggest thing, he's actually naturally quite a gifted driver. He always used to struggle on new tyres because he'd always over drive so that's something we've really worked on."

Howard meanwhile finished fifth in the table, with Adam further back after missing Spa with Covid. Their main cause of regret was Howard's qualifying accident at Oulton.

"We had a good start to the season, scored good points," Adam tells MN. "And then our championship at the end just lost a bit of momentum. We just struggled for a little bit of consistency in performance and some big points scores.

"The big one unfortunately was Andrew's small accident in Oulton qualifying, just one tiny error at the fastest point of the circuit cost quite dear because then we had to use our spare car, had to start from the back of the grid in GT3 and, of all the circuits, at Oulton it's just impossible to try and get by. That really hurt Andrew's championship massively, our very low score at Oulton.

"It [the spare car] didn't feel too different, it's just the guys had such a big job to get all the parts that were salvageable over on Saturday night at Oulton. It felt fine at Donington, we just lacked a bit of performance. Andrew definitely it's the best I've seen him drive, this year."

It's worth mentioning some conspicuous unusual suspects too. Scott Malvern and Nick Jones in their new Team Parker Racing Porsche 911 showed promise and pace, and bagged pole at Oulton, while Sam and Richard Neary in their Team Abba Mercedes, in their second season in the category as a pair, plus the debutant Clutton/Tillbrook effort, were regular frontrunning presences.

Both impressed with their pace, took their first overall race wins and should have been better represented in the final points table, with inexperience and bad luck costing them. Team Abba might even had made a title run with a following wind. Both too are promising more next season. ■

GT4: TALE OF THE CENTURY

If the British GT3 championship contest was tight, GT4's was largely a race of one. The 2018 GT4 drivers' and teams' champion Century Motorsport, following a couple of quieter seasons, steeled itself for this campaign. It had upgraded BMW M4s, plus it put together a particularly potent-looking driver line-up in the shape of reigning Ginetta GT4 Supercup champion Will Burns and his runner-up rival from that campaign Gus Burton, in the #57 car.

"Anyone can argue that #57 pairing was a proper gun pairing," Century boss Nathan Freke tells MN, "champion and a vice champion at a very highly competitive one-make championship the year before. They've done a fantastic job [this year], they've been faultless. It's not been a season without incidents and they've just really kept their nose clean and that's what wins championships.

"It was an Evo upgrade [on the car this year], which actually probably isn't as much as you think. It transforms the car in the wet because it's a very advanced traction control system. But we came into the championship this year with a proper testing programme and we hit it hard, we found some little bits and pieces that perhaps we hadn't found before, understanding the new tyre a little bit better. We arrived at round one ready and that's really the first year we've had where we've had that luxury. And the car is mega: it's reliable, you get a knock: it's strong. And it's fast. It's just a joy to be part of BMW."

The #57 car's results were a model of winning (or nearly winning) then scoring solidly with the resultant success penalty: P1; P4, P1; P3; P2; P5; P2; P1; P3. Wow.

It meant that the GT4 crown got confirmed a race early, becoming the first since 2015 to take an overall British GT drivers' crown with a race to spare. Indeed it wrapped up the championship in style with Will Burns, despite only needing essentially to circulate to ensure the title, passing James Kell's RJN McLaren in Oulton Park's wet late on so that the championship was won with a race win.

Burns explains to MN: "When you're watching it on TV all the team would probably be like 'what you doing?' Just settle for what you got'. But that's not in me: I'm a racer. Even at my age, I'm 31 now and I'm still racing so just wanted to do that one for the team.

"I wanted to do that for Gus because he's driven great throughout the whole year and we've worked really well as a team, and we wanted to be on that top step celebrating, you can't beat that really.

"I wouldn't want to speak to him [Burton] last year because he was the enemy and now we are really good friends. It was just great that we could work together and win a title. He deserves it more than anyone as well. I know how quick he is from Supercup days, he's a tremendous talent and he's one to watch out for in the future."

Burns/Burton in a Century Motorsport BMW dominated GT4

Burns and Burton: last year rivals; this year partners in crime

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BRITISH GT REVIEW

BRITISH GT'S TOP 10 DRIVERS OF 2021

***Graham Keilloh** ranks the top performers from British GT's GT3 and GT4 championship contests over the course of this season*

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

BRITISH GT'S TOP FIVE GT3 DRIVERS OF 2021

1 Dennis Lind

A revelation. Entering British GT against a stellar line-up of Pro rivals, and after a couple of difficult years, Dennis Lind from the off became the championship's most exciting and often fastest exponent, as evidenced by his near-monopoly of fastest laps. Even so he was driving with the title in mind and indeed it was hard to point at errors made, and all the while was an engaging and friendly presence in the paddock.

2 Phil Keen

Phil Keen in 2021 kept up his absurd record of somehow never winning a British GT overall drivers' championship, yet he retained too his status as the category's standard bearer. This time it was in new surroundings, a WPI Lamborghini alongside Michael Igoe, and Keen worked positively with his new Am partner. Having experienced more misfortune than other title challengers in 2021, and now with a year under its belt, the effort will be hard to beat in 2022.

3 Yelmer Buurman

Smooth and assured, Yelmer Buurman had another strong British GT campaign driving alongside Ian Loggie in a rapid RAM Racing Mercedes partnership. And without a late red flag in the finale, depriving Buurman a final charge, or indeed without one of the double dose of foul luck hit earlier in the year, their efforts could have taken them all the way to the overall title. It would have been hard to begrudge Buurman the award.

4 Sandy Mitchell

The 21-year-old reigning champion had a lot new in 2021, now leading a Pro-Am partnership rather than being half of an all-Silver graded pair, and it was his first campaign as a Lamborghini factory driver. He adapted well, looking like he belonged in the prestigious Pro battle despite a major points loss in round one, and his thrilling late pass of Lind at Silverstone provided one of the season's highlights.

5 Jonny Adam

The returning four-time champion got the band back together with his 2015 title-winning partner Andrew Howard in a Beechdean Aston this year, and at Brands' season opener it looked like they'd never been away. It never was quite as good again though, and the effort lost crucial late momentum with Howard's Oulton qualifying smash. But as ever it was hard to fault Adam, and he insists the partnership still has title-winning potential plus that his title number five is unfinished business.

BRITISH GT'S TOP FIVE GT4 DRIVERS OF 2021

1 Gus Burton

Gus Burton stepped into British GT in a Century BMW and was immediately a complete performer in his all-star effort alongside former Ginetta Supercup rival Will Burns. The effort become a steamroller, with neither driver, team nor car faltering, and driving partner and team alike were dazzled by Burton's driving efforts that were both fast and error free. It was easy to forget he's only 18. He'll presumably be a GT star for some time to come.

2 Darren Turner

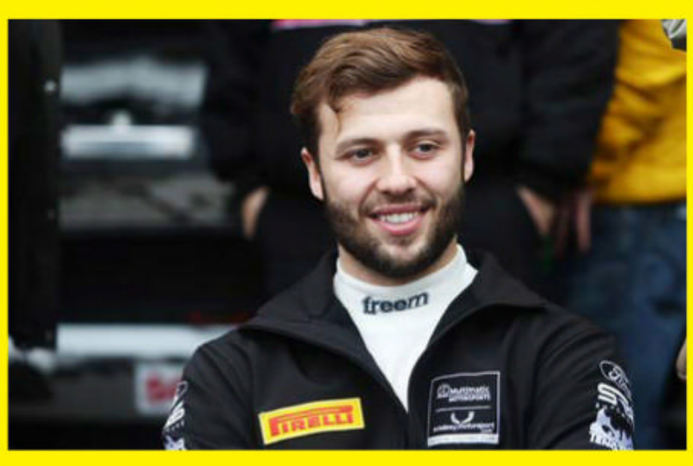
The multiple Le Mans winner showed all of the skills in an Aston Martin we've grown to expect from him, and did so from the off by winning his first outing in the Silverstone 500. Turner worked constructively with his Am partner Matt Topham and took another win before the year was out. About the only faux pas was losing the Spa win to a track limits penalty, though it was a sanction which Turner found baffling.

3 Will Burns

Ginetta stalwart Will Burns returned to British GT this year and, paired up with the man who was his 2020 rival, became friends and constructive partners with Burton. Burns showed fine ability to stay out of trouble, even at the stages where the GT4 battle more generally resembled a destruction derby. But Burns showed he was an irrepressible racer too, not least at Oulton when he put icing on the title cake with a late victory pass.

4 Matt Cowley

The Formula Ford-formed racer was unable to repeat his 2020 championship challenge, as the Academy Ford Mustang struggled for competitiveness early on, something Cowley attributed to "external factors and bad luck". But after a mid-year turnaround he got two wins in the final four races. Having lost his driver partner Jordan Albert towards the end of last season Cowley has grown to become de facto leader of his partnership with Will Moore.



5 Jordan Collard

The effervescent Jordan Collard was another unable to repeat his title challenge from last year. In his case, he'd switched from an HHC McLaren to one run by Team Rocket RJN. The partnership looked promising but like all GT4 McLarens it struggled to get on the pace particularly in early season, amid wider muttering about the car's Balance of Performance. Collard also noted possible team "growing pains". Still he salvaged a race win, at Snetterton where he pulled clear imperiously.

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GB3 REVIEW

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

O'Sullivan dominated GB3 in his first attempt

GB3 SUCCUMBS TO A ZAK ATTACK

Consistency, brain power and speed meant Vettel-esque 16-year-old O'Sullivan steamrollered the contest, as Graham Keilloh explains

Rewind 12 months and Zak O'Sullivan experienced something like motorsport's ultimate gut punch. He danced in the Brands Hatch pitlane thinking final-race victory got him the British Formula 4 title. But it hadn't, as only half points were awarded in that truncated finale, meaning the Carlin driver's total came up just short.

Yet, as is sometimes said, in motor racing the next year's season starts on the same day the previous one ends. O'Sullivan took this almost literally.

"Obviously after British F4 I was pretty disappointed, but the Monday after the race weekend I was in for a seat for at the time the BRDC British F3 car, getting ready to test that," O'Sullivan tells Motorsport News.

"And since then it's been an upward progression, getting used to the car, and before round one we were in quite a nice spot. We could have had pole at round one, that's been the case throughout the year we've been up there, and done our stuff in the race as well.

"In F4 I was strong enough, we were a bit unlucky, I think we had three mechanical failures across the year that in the end in such a close championship hurt us. I made a few mistakes that year, tried to iron those out, and only [made] minor mistakes this year, so that's paid off."

Quite. O'Sullivan in GB3, as it was renamed from BRDC British Formula 3 mid-year, was again in his first season in a category and was again with Carlin. But the outcome this time, in GB3, couldn't have been further from final-round knife-edge calculations. O'Sullivan wrapped up a dominant title with two races remaining. It was as good as sealed long before that.

"Zak's done exactly what I thought he was capable of," his team boss Trevor Carlin, a man who knows a lot about developing young drivers, tells MN. "Sometimes you have expectations of a driver and it doesn't quite come off but with what Zak's done is what I hoped would happen has happened, he hasn't let me down once. He's been amazingly fast, been super consistent and really he's dominated the championship and it's through his consistent speed and approach. If you want to win a championship you've got to be competitive at every race and that's what he's done."

O'Sullivan took seven victories – when no-one else took more than four – and seven more podium finishes. Every one of his weekends contained at least a win or two second places, and it wasn't until August that he failed to finish a non-reversed grid race on the podium (and that was after a collision for which the other guy held his hands up).

And O'Sullivan confirmed the title in style at Donington Park. He needed only to stay out of trouble to inch over the line, but he won from pole, and in the early corners resolutely sat it out side-by-side through the Craner Curves with the attacking Reece Ushijima of Hitech GP. It meant O'Sullivan retained his first place that he kept until the end.

Carlin therefore scoffed appropriately when this author suggested consistency was O'Sullivan's greatest asset. "Well it's not that, he's been fast," Carlin asserts. "Today [at Donington] pole position, wins the race, so he's consistently quick, it's unbeatable isn't it? That's the magic sauce, if you're fast and consistently fast no-one's ever going to beat you and that's what he's done."

Carlin reckons indeed O'Sullivan's biggest strength is elsewhere, and is towering in his praise. "He was, when we first met him, very analytical and professional; you have to remember he's 16 years old so it's quite stunningly impressive his level that he's at now. I dread to think how intelligent and prepared he will be in a couple of years' time when he's doing Formula 2 or something like that.

"If I had to compare Zak with somebody that we've run it could be someone like Sebastian [Vettel] because he was very serious, very focused and very intelligent and fast and he went on to win four World championships. Zak is more akin to Sebastian than any other I've had."

Even a maximised season from a rival would have struggled against O'Sullivan's steamroller, but O'Sullivan was further aided by the inability of others this year to string together a campaign.

The most conspicuous of these was Ayrton Simmons of Chris Dittmann Racing. He was by consensus the pre-season title favourite, having finished a competitive third in the standings in 2019 and been right at the sharp end in a couple of 2020 guest appearances.

Keeping in line with this, he won 2021's opening race from pole, but getting tangled up with Hitech's Bart Horsten at Druids on lap 1 of race 2 was a portent for a frustrating time.

"[We had] a few issues," Simmons explains to MN. "One of them was a diff in one round and we made further investigations in the tub and found out it was fractured, so we had that for two rounds. Once we changed those things it was bang on the money again."

A double win at Silverstone in August signalled his return to form, but by then the title was long gone. "It was a bit of a shame," Simmons continues, "but if you look at the standings mid-season I was P7, P8, and to recover all the way up to P2 is a major achievement for me and everyone in the team."

Ushijima looked like he'd go toe-to-toe with O'Sullivan when he took two wins from pole in Silverstone's round two. But things got more difficult subsequently with a succession of scrapes – by no means all his fault – as well as a costly Spa penalty for passing off track and a quiet second Silverstone round.

Roman Bilinski, stepping up from British F4, was a revelation in GB3. He found the more advanced cars much more to his taste and spent much of the summer scoring at near O'Sullivan-type levels. But he didn't make his GB3 debut until round three at Donington. Ollie Bearman and Luke Browning had clear frontrunning capability but made only one-off appearances.

Yet from an early stage of the year there looked only one winner, and O'Sullivan's hoped-for next step is to race in FIA F3. This week he got to take part in its post-season test as part of his GB3 title prize.

Carlin, for one, has few doubts about him. "I don't think he'll have any issues stepping up. He's just a professional, and if he drives any car whether it's an F3 or F2 or a GT car or prototype he'll adapt to it quickly and get the best out of it. He just keeps getting better and better, every day." ■

O'Sullivan sealed the title with two races to go, and did so in style

Carlin (r) likens O'Sullivan's intelligence, focus and speed to Vettel's

Pre-season favourite Simmons won opener

> ***"O'Sullivan is akin to Sebastian Vettel"***
>
> **Trevor Carlin**

GB3 TOP FIVE DRIVERS OF 2021

1 Zak O'Sullivan

As Trevor Carlin noted, such a combination of speed and consistency as displayed by Zak O'Sullivan this year is unbeatable, and the numbers speak for themselves. O'Sullivan didn't have a single off weekend while his rivals had plenty, and about his only blot was leaving the track battling with erstwhile British Formula 4 rival Luke Browning at Oulton Park. The rounded O'Sullivan package will surely go far, and he's only 16.

2 Ayrton Simmons

Just what would the final table have looked like had four-time winner Ayrton Simmons not had his extended technical woes mid-season? The suspicion is that he might still have come up short of O'Sullivan's total, but it would have been fun finding out. His late-year upturn to finish championship runner-up showed the talent he doubtlessly has, particularly in outrunning talented Ollie Bearman at Silverstone. Like O'Sullivan, he has FIA Formula 3 aims for next season.

3 Roman Bilinski

Another major 'what if?' is where Roman Bilinski would have ended in the GB3 standings with a full campaign? He had a difficult time in British Formula 4, and sometimes was rather a pariah there. But in GB3, where the greater power and downforce suited him, he was an immediate revelation with fast and assured showings. For much of the summer he scored near O'Sullivan's rate, though results tailed off a little near the year's end.

4 Reece Ushijima

The Hitech GP driver was another to end the year rueing that he couldn't string together the high peaks. In Japanese-American Ushijima's case the Himalayan mountain top was his two wins from pole in Silverstone's round two, but it was followed by a run of races wherein he struggled for a clear run and much of the misery wasn't his fault. His much-improved Donington finale was more representative.

5 Christian Mansell

A determined and improving campaign ensured a 1-3 in the drivers' table for Carlin, narrowly missing a 1-2 indeed. Though equally Mansell wasn't too often the quickest Carlin runner. Running away from team-mate O'Sullivan to win in Spa's rain was the charismatic Australian's high point, while his Brands Hatch round-one sweep around the outside of Paddock's Turn 1 to take the lead from seventh on the grid will live long in the memory.

Ushijima got Silverstone double

RACING REPORTS

DONINGTON PARK: MSVR BY PETER SCHERER — OCTOBER 30

CHARTERIS DOMINATES CLUBMANS AT DONINGTON

Mark Charteris' Mallock Mk21 comfortably won both Clubmans Sports Prototype races at Donington Park last weekend.

In the first race, Mathieu Gauthier-Thornton's Phantom headed the chase after demoting Steve Dickens' Mallock early on. All three held station in a three-lap sprint to the flag after a four-lap safety car intervention.

The second race was red flagged just before a torrential downpour. With Charteris clear from the start, Dickens pitted from second with brake problems, which left Clive Wood's Mallock in second place after he had recovered from a first-lap off.

There were three wins from three races for Jamie Osborne on his Focus Cup debut. His race-one escape left the rest to fight for second. Simon Rudd eventually overtook Simon Walton into the chicane on lap six. Runner-up spot was enough for Rudd to be crowned the 2021 champion.

Lewis Ryan took charge of race two after Ian Mitchell had run wide on the second lap. But Osborne was into second and already challenging before he claimed the lead into the Old Hairpin a lap later.

Scott Parkin joined the four-car battle for second and emerged from the chicane on lap six at the front. That left Rudd to pip Ryan for third in the dash to the flag.

Osborne started back in sixth for the third race but had just grabbed second behind Gary Mitchell when the safety car appeared. From the green flag, Osborne tried for the lead around the outside at Redgate and ran wide dropping to seventh but a storming recovery drive saw him lead into Coppice with a lap to go. Mitchell retained a solid second, with Parkin and Rudd completing the top four.

Jamie McInulty scored a lights-to-flag win in the Lotus Elise Trophy opener. David Alexander held second place from half distance but spent the final laps defending hard from Alex Ball.

Matthias Radestock led the second race with McInulty having to charge up from 10th on the grid. McInulty led from Redgate on lap nine, with Mick Edwards chasing Radestock for second.

Chris Bassett's Peugeot 206 GTi just held off David Clark's Renault 5 Turbo to win the first Track Attack race. Bassett retired from the lead of race two in the pits, leaving Andrew Neal's Peugeot 106 GTi victorious over Clark.

RACE WINNERS

Clubmans Sports Prototypes
Races 1 & 2: Mark Charteris (Mallock Mk21)

Focus Cup
Races 1, 2 & 3: Jamie Osborne

Lotus Elise Trophy
Races 1 & 2: Jamie McInulty

Track Attack
Race 1: Chris Bassett (Peugeot 306 GTi);
Race 2: Andrew Neal (Peugeot 106 GTi)

Lotus Cup UK Speed
Kim Adams (Elise S1)

Photo: Steve Jones

Mark Charteris was uncatchable in both Clubmans races in his Mallock Mk21

BRISCA F1: BRADFORD BY COLIN CASSERLEY — OCTOBER 30

WAINMAN SURVIVES IN A DRAMATIC OSDAL FINAL

Photo: Colin Casserley

Wainman (515) survive a late skirmish with Fairhurst to take the glory

Lady luck smiled on Frankie Wainman Jr at Odsal Stadium in Bradford on Saturday night. With a lap and a half remaining in the final, Wainman trailed Dutchman Roy Peetoom by over half a lap but as Peetoom tried to lap Karl Hawkins the two cars tangled and crashed out of the race handing the lead to Wainman.

As the Peetoom and Hawkins's cars ended up on the racing line, a yellow flag bunched up the field and set up a one-lap dash to the chequered flag.

Wainman got a great restart and opened up a several cars' length advantage over second-place man Lee Fairhurst but, coming off Turn 2, Wainman went wide and Fairhurst began to close in. Going into Turn 3, Fairhurst slammed into Wainman's car sending the race leader into the wall.

Fairhurst maneuvered to the inside of the track and it appeared to be a race-winning move, but Wainman bounced off the wall and knocked Fairhurst to the inside of the track. The two cars drag raced to the line with Wainman taking the race win by less than a metre.

Winner Wainman said: "I had a great restart and thought I had got away from Fairhurst, but he came back at me and knocked me into the wall, I have gained some experience from racing in New Zealand about what to do in those situations, and I just let the car ride the wall and was able to gather it up coming off turn four, but it was close."

The defeated Fairhurst said: "I didn't get a good restart but I had a killer Turn 1 and 2 and was able to use the momentum down the back straight to catch Wainman, I had to go for it and thought I had got past him but he bounced off the wall and into me. I just kept my foot in it and hoped I would get to the line first."

Peetoom, who turned 17 years old in August, and was driving a BriSCA F1 for only the fourth time, had mixed emotions. He said: "But for a lap and a half, I would have won. I am bummed out about it but I still enjoyed racing in England for the first time."

Results

Organiser: Startrax, BriSCA F1 **When:** October 30 **Where:** Odsal Stadium, Bradford **Starters:** 37.
1 Frankie Wainman Jr; 2 Lee Fairhurst; 3 Tom Harris; 4 Jelle Tesselaar; 5 Bobby Griffin; 6 Paul Hines; 7 Karl Hawkins; 8 Mat Newson; 9 Richard Bryan, no other finishers.

IRISH RALLYCROSS: MONDELLO BY HAL RIDGE — OCTOBER 31

TOHILL TOPS OUT AT MONDELLO IN IRISH RX BATTLE

Four-time champion Derek Tohill took victory in both the Supercar final and Super Final at Park, lifting himself back to the head of the 2021 Irish Rallycross Championship standings.

The Dublin driver faced stiff competition from Tommy Graham in an older-specification Ford Fiesta Supercar.

In wet and slippery autumnal conditions at the Naas circuit, the pair had contact in one of the heat races when Graham missed a braking point, but both made it to the grid for the Supercar final. Tohill was on pole with fellow ex-Olsbergs MSE Ford Fiesta racer Declan Kelly on the outside and Graham in the middle.

While Tohill led the encounter from the front and finished 2.352 seconds ahead of Kelly, Graham had an off-circuit excursion in the challenging conditions and finished fourth. Michael Morris inherited a podium finish when Graham had his incident.

Starting on pole for the Super Final, Tohill again led, despite a tap on the rear from Kelly, who suffered enough front-end damage to go out as a result. Graham meanwhile battled back through the field from the rear of the grid to run second, but on the final lap was passed by Tohill's PFCRX team-mate and Modified winner Peter McGarry in his Volvo C30. McGarry had started second on the grid for the Modified final, but seized the lead at the first corner as pole-sitter Philip Kelly made a poor start from pole position.

Toyota MR2 driver Kelly fought back to finish second, with Stanley Bovill third. Michael Ryan won the single-make Ford Fiesta Zetec category, Keith Kerrshaawe claimed the Production honours. Jake O'Sullivan won a close-fought Buggy final, while Loughlin Farrell claimed the Junior spoils and Patricia Denning took top spot in the Rally Car final.

Results

Organiser: Mondello Park Sports Club **When:** October 31 **Where:** Mondello Park **Starters:** 43.
Round 3: Super Final: 1 Derek Tohill (Ford Fiesta) 4m01.066s; 2 Peter McGarry (Volvo C30) +10.517s; 3 Tommy Graham (Ford Fiesta); 4 Philip Kelly (Toyota MR2); 5 Stanley Bovill (Ford Escort); 6 Sam Bovill (Vauxhall Astra). Supercar: Tohill; Modified: McGarry; Junior: Loughlin Farrell (Ford Fiesta); Production: Keith Kerrshaawe (Peugeot 106); Buggy: Jake O'Sullivan (Semog); Ford Fiestas: Michael Ryan (Ford Fiesta); Rally Car: Patricia Denning (Mitsubishi Lancer); Autocross: Jonny Treanor (Smog Buggy)

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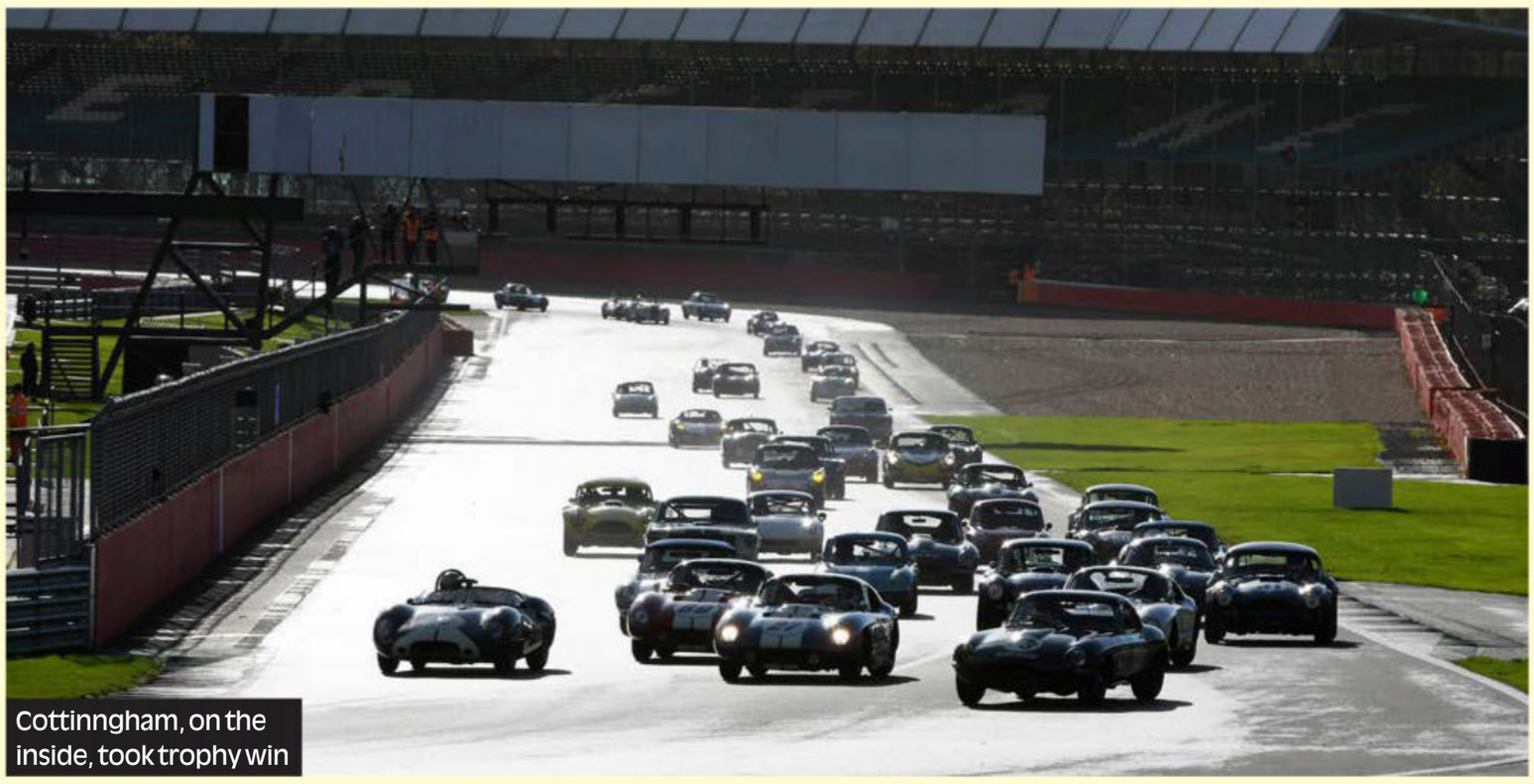
RACING REPORTS

Photos: Steve Jones

SILVERSTONE: MSVR/MRL BY MARCUS PYE — OCTOBER 30-31

LISTER STORMS TO RAC PALL MALL CUP VICTORY



Cottinngham, on the inside, took trophy win

Freddie Hunt had qualified on pole position

James Colburn was the tin-top star in an Alfa Romeo

RACE WINNERS

Royal Automobile Club Pall Mall Trophy
James Cottingham/Max Girardo (Lister-Jaguar Costin)

Jaguar Classic Challenge
Gary Pearson (E-type)

RAC Woodcote Trophy/ Stirling Moss Trophy
Rob Smith/Chris Ward (Lister-Jaguar Knobbly)

Amon Cup Ford GT40
Miles Griffiths/Gordon Shedden

Historic Touring Car Challenge
Paul Mensley (Ford Sierra Cosworth RS500)

HRDC Jack Sears Trophy
Mark Burton/Jason Minshaw (Ford Mustang)

HRDC Allstars
James Colburn (Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint GT)

A spin apiece did not derail Lister-Jaguar Costin drivers James Cottingham and Max Girardo's victory quest as the Lister-Jaguar Costin pair saw off a trio of Shelby Cobra Daytona Coupe evocations in a stunning Royal Automobile Club Pall Mall Cup which closed Motor Racing Legends' season on Silverstone's GP Circuit on Sunday.

After three hours of fast tactical racing, livestream televised to the world, they finished 46 seconds clear of George Pochciol/Matt Wrigley/Olly Bryant, with Michael Cullen/Paddy Shovlin/Sam Tordoff a further five adrift. Roy Alderslade, who bookended Andy Jordan's stint, finished fourth on the lead lap.

Local Jaguar guru Gary Pearson aced Saturday's programme-opening Jaguar Classic Challenge, but Richard Kent briefly battled his ex-Dick Protheroe Fixed Head Coupe CUT 7 to the front. Kent's co-driver Chris Ward took up the chase after the mandatory 60-second stops, although he was concerned an oil leak. Andrew Smith finished Mark Donnor's car strongly in a podium lockout for Pearsons Engineering-prepared cars. Fifth-placed Olly Bryant (FHC) won the Pre-'63 class.

Pearson was gunning for a double in the Stirling Moss Trophy '50s sportscar contest, but a broken diff sidelined his Lister-Jaguar. Richard Bradley, hustling Michael Birch's ex-Graham Hill Team Lotus 15, was left in at the stops, but Ward closed in driving the Lister started by Rob Smith. Calculations suggested that they would be together approaching Stowe on the final lap, but the Lotus slowed with a fuel pick-up problem at Maggots and Ward powered past. Bradley pulled up, promoting Mark Cole (Lotus 11) to second, clear of RAC Woodcote Trophy victors Mike Grant Peterkin/Patrick Blakeney-Edwards' ex-Equipe Endeavour Cooper-Jaguar T38.

Seven GT40s started the Amon Trophy GT40 race following a punishing late-season schedule, but the tussle between Miles Griffiths/Gordon Shedden and Spa Six Hours victors James Cottingham/Olly Bryant - in the for-mer's car this time - was defused when the oil pressure warning light flickered under braking. Bryant prudently dived in for a top-up. As Shedden mirrored their result on the mini-series' Donington debut in May, Bryant almost caught second-placed Richard Cook/David Cuff.

Seeking damp parts of the track to cool his wet tyres, Paul Mensley thoroughly deserved Sunday's Historic Touring Car Challenge win. The Nissan Skylines of Simon Garrad and Ric Wood/Freddie Hunt both wilted, indeed Hunt – who qualified Wood's on pole – was set to catch Mensley when his fuel pressure died. Steve Dance (Ford Capri-GAA) thus inherited second, clear of Andy Middlehurst in Jonathan Bailey's original Skyline.

Both packed HRDC grids provided entertaining racing. Mark Burton/Jason Minshaw asserted the former's Mustang over the feistiest Lotus Cortinas in Saturday's Jack Sears Trophy saloon bout. Neil Brown and Irishman David Dickinson led the chase after initial leader Richard Dutton spun. James Colburn emerged from a five-car scrap to claim Dunlop All-stars and Classic Alfa Challenge gold from fellow Alfa '105' racer Richard Merrell. Early pacemaker Grant Williams slipped to fourth behind Ben Colburn's Mini Cooper S.

KNOCKHILL: SMRC BY KEVIN PICK — OCTOBER 31

GUESTS LEAD THE WAY IN DRAMATIC SCOTTISH FIESTA CUP SHOWDOWNS AT KNOCKHILL

The Scottish Motor Racing Club held its final meeting of the year at Knockhill. The circuit was run in reverse direction, so the driers tackled the anti-clockwise configuration on a damp track after morning rain.

The Scottish Fiesta ST Cup was dominated by three guest drivers. Oly Mortimer. The multiple Scottish saloon champion took two good wins in his first ST races. He was under pressure but eased clear each time.

Returning Fiesta ST champion George Orr took second in both races, after some energetic scrapping with JCW Mini national racer Liam Larbert, who was on his first visit to the circuit. Larbert lost third on the final lap in race one to new champion Steven Gray. Larbert was disqualified in race two handing third spot to Gray.

The Scottish Mini Cooper and Cooper S championships started together but were split on the grid. In races one and two, the Cooper S R53 Cup cars raced clear and Andrew Lamont won both races. The Cooper Cup had three different winners after some close racing. In race one, Neil Hose passed long-time leader Michael Weddell on lap 11 of 12. Weddell settled for second and his first championship title. In race two, Neil Hose led until lap four, and then Craig Blake took over and went on to win. Race three only featured Cooper cars, the top six finishers were reversed on the grid. From the second row of the grid, Chad Little took the lead then spun halfway around the opening lap. He recovered from fourth to lead by lap six and take the win. Dylan O'Donnell was second after Neil Hose went off on the last lap at the hairpin.

In Scottish Classics Shonny Paterson took both race wins in his TR8, having battled past John Kinmond's Rover SD1. Andrew Graham brought another TR8 into third in race one. In race two, Philip Russell's BMW 3 series nearly caught Kinmond as he raced into third. Kinmond took the championship title after race one.

In the Scottish Citroen C1 Cup, rookie Sam Corson took two fine of wins. In race one, he led home Kyle Nisbet, Ryan Smith and defending champion Ross Dunn, with 1.4 seconds covering the top four. In race two, Corson took the lead on lap two from Kyle Nisbet who stayed second. Dunn ran a close fourth behind Calum Conway and retained the championship.

Photos: Jim Moir

Mortimer excelled on his outing in the Fiesta series

RACE WINNERS

Scottish Mini Cooper S R53 Cup
Race 1 & 2: Andrew Lamont

Scottish Mini Cooper Cup
Race 1: Neil Hose;
Race 2: Craig Blake;
Race 3: Chad Little

Fiesta ST Cup
Race 1 & 2: Oliver Mortimer

Scottish Classics Sports and Saloons
Race 1 & 2: Shonny Paterson (Triumph TR8)

Scottish Citroen C1 Cup
Race 1 & 2: Sam Corson

Two wins in the Classics went to Shonny Pearson's TR8

WHAT'S ON

YOUTUBE

To supplement our understanding of Louise Aitken-Walker, our readers' Q&A guest this week, the VHS Rallies project on YouTube as ever is our friend.

It has a Top Gear feature tracking Aitken-Walker on the 1990 Monte Carlo Rally, the first round of a campaign that would make her Britain's first rallying World champion. The 13-minute video's at: youtube.com/watch?v=LF22sx7-iQ8 or search for '1990 Louise Aitken-Walker feature'.

William Woollard from the Jim Clark Room in Duns – noting the locality's uncanny knack of producing motorsport talent including Aitken-Walker – introduces the feature wherein Tony Mason follows Aitken-Walker's Vauxhall Astra as well as the event more broadly. There's great and thrilling footage throughout and plenty of stage-side interviews with Aitken-Walker and others.

And if all this isn't enough VHS Rallies also checks in with Aitken-Walker after she's sealed her World title that year, in the form of a Blue Peter feature wherein she seeks to teach presenter Yvette Fielding how to drive a rally car. That's at: youtube.com/watch?v=Mfp2Is-2Jzc.

Both videos also have footage of Aitken-Walker's harrowing smash from 1990's Portuguese round, where her Astra rolled down a cliff face and sank, upside-down, to the bottom of a lake. Fortunately, both Aitken-Walker and co-driver Tina Thorner escaped injury.

Graham Keilloh

Aitken-Walker: in TV's focus

TV GUIDE

As with the United States Grand Prix just passed, everything is set later for the UK-based Formula 1 fan this weekend for Mexico's stop-off. Sky Sports F1's weekend-preview F1 Show is this evening at 2200hrs-2300hrs followed immediately by the drivers' press conference at 2300hrs-0030hrs.

Sky's channel also has a treat for us between the two Friday practice sessions with highlights of two classic Mexican Grands Prix. First it's that from the height of F1's rip-snorting turbo era, in 1986, shown at 1900hrs-1945hrs, then it's the 1991 race at 1945hrs-2030hrs.

Ted Kravitz meanwhile will be back this weekend with his Notebooks. A qualifying review follows Saturday's live broadcast at 2145hrs-2215hrs while the race one does likewise on Sunday at 2200hrs-2230hrs.

Channel 4's qualifying highlights are on Sunday morning, at 0830hrs-0930hrs, while its race highlights are at 2335hrs-0105hrs also on Sunday.

If you miss the live broadcast of the World Endurance Championship's Bahrain season-closer on Saturday, you can watch an hour's highlights of it on Sunday morning at 1000hrs-1100hrs on Eurosport 2. While if you watch to catch up with last weekend's first leg of WEC's Bahrain double header then there are chances today and across the coming days to watch highlights on Eurosport.

Graham Keilloh

Mexico in 1986: a first for Benetton and Berger

LIVE TV

FORMULA 1 MEXICAN GRAND PRIX AUTODROMO HERMANOS RODRIGUEZ

Practice 1: Friday, 1700hrs-1845hrs, Sky Sports F1

Practice 2: Friday, 2045hrs-2230hrs, Sky Sports F1

Practice 3: Saturday, 1645hrs-1810hrs, Sky Sports F1

Qualifying: Saturday, 1900hrs-2145hrs, Sky Sports F1

Race: Sunday, 1730hrs-2200hrs (start time 1900hrs), Sky Sports F1

WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP 8 HOURS OF BAHRAIN

Race: Saturday, 1045hrs-1930hrs, Eurosport 2

NASCAR PHOENIX

Race: Sunday, 1930hrs-0030hrs, Premier Sports 2

NASCAR XFINITY PHOENIX

Race: Sunday, 0000hrs-0400hrs, Premier Sports 2

LISTINGS

SATURDAY

■ **Donington Park, Leics**

BRSCC meeting: Fun Cup, ST-XR Challenge **Starts** racing from 1045hrs (qualifying from 0910hrs) **Admission** adult £14, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0843 453 9000

SATURDAY-SUNDAY

■ **Silverstone, Northants**

Walter Hayes Trophy: FF1600, HSCC Allcomers, Production Sports/GT, Monoposto **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1133hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 0900hrs **Admission** £14 Web silverstone.co.uk

■ **Brands Hatch, Kent**

BARC meeting: Trucks, Legends, Pickups, CTCRC, Junior Saloons, Hyundai Coupe **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1035hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1023hrs (qualifying from 1000hrs) **Admission** adult £22, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0843 453 9000

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ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S **FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!**

Alex Ireland enjoyed BTRDA Rallycross's visit to Knockhill track

Chris Collier's Time Attack photo

Dean Chilvers' pic of Porsche fun

David Harbey's flame-out snap

Superkarts from Rich Cranston

NEXT WEEK **OUT THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11**

*Correct at time of going to press

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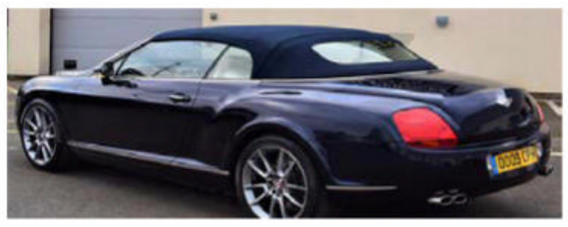

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